Week ending December 29 1956 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

Grandfather and the Golden West
by **BARRY PEROWNE**

A Bachelor's Story
by **FRANK O'CONNOR**

THE SMALL WOMAN: Gladys Aylward becomes a spy for the man she loves

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

George Ditton finds rural life too busy

THOUGH his home is in the heart of the East Anglian farming country, George Ditton, the artist who is illustrating our serial, *Sapphires On Wednesday*, painstakingly avoids having anything to do with animals. "When we first moved out here," Ditton says, "we had a horse. But I spent so much time getting it out of trouble, feeding it and taking off my gumboots that there was no time left for painting."

Nowadays, Ditton fights against the temptation to keep pigs and chickens, and is able to spend ten hours a day painting. "The only animal round the place," he says, "is Bamboozle the poodle."

Soon after the war Ditton demolished the barn that stood near his home and built a studio from the timber and bricks. As it is separate from the house he can steer clear of another of the distractions of his rural home—three young sons and an even younger daughter.

Ditton has been to all the places that make the backgrounds for his illustrations in *Sapphires On Wednesday*. In the early thirties he spent two years in Italy—at art school in Milan and working for an advertising agency. "We used to spend weekends camping and picnicking by the lakes," he says wistfully. He has twice been to America, once before the war, and in 1948 when he paid a return visit with his wife Elizabeth.

He has always been connected with the world of art. He spent several years in advertising agencies and took to freelance illustrating after war service in the navy. Now, at forty-seven, he has the sort of hard-working but free life he has always wanted. He does make one concession to the rural life that he finds can be so distracting. He is chairman of his local parish council.

WHILE digging a Christmas tree from his Surrey garden a few days before Christmas last year, William Kean Seymour had a vivid recollection of a childhood party nearly sixty years ago. During the festivities a candle fell from the Christmas tree and set fire to some tissue decorations. "We snatched up the tablecloth and tried to smother the flames," says Seymour, "but in seconds the tree was ablaze. We could not stop it from being destroyed."

As Seymour was digging out last year's Christmas tree, he invested it with a personality of its own. "I wondered how I would have enjoyed having hot wax dripping down my arms and sides," he says. "I decided to write a poem about it." The poem is on page 25.

Seymour, at sixty-nine, is married to Rosalind Wade, the novelist. He has had four novels published and several anthologies of poems and parodies. Three years ago his English translation appeared of the longer poems of Robert Burns.

"For weeks afterwards I received angry letters from exiled Scotsmen in America and Canada accusing me of being a sacrilegious Sassenach," he says. "But from Scotland came several letters of congratulation. After all, many Scots admit that they can't understand Burns themselves."

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MOTHER

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A Reminder

Don't be late in sending in your entry for the "Fitting Phrases" competition which appeared in last week's issue. A cash prize of £250 must be won in this unique advertisement contest. Read the simple instructions carefully, then make a "bee-line" for that £250. Why not make it a fireside game and get all the family to help? Last date to post entries, Wednesday, January 2nd.

Free Speech

● When the neighbours face the music ● Are charity costs too high?

● Paying up with a town hall tax

THREE years ago, my two sons learned to play the recorder and joined their school orchestra. They came home so enthusiastic that my husband bought one as well, and I quickly revived my interest in our piano, which I hadn't played since we were married.

When our quartet started practising, we had one or two complaints from neighbours. But we must have shown some improvement, because this year we have had three invitations to play at parties.

Our music may not be of Hallé Orchestra standard, but at least we are providing our own entertainment. My mother, now seventy, listens to us enthralled. It's so much like the old days, she says.—P. T. L., Yorkshire.

Church's Lifeblood

Some people may not like bazaars ("Free Speech," December 8), but if you do away with them you take away from the churches a large slice of much-needed income. Our church, for instance, starts off the New Year with a record £255 raised at this year's effort. To lose this money, which represents months of hard work and preparation, would be a crippling blow.—B. B. S., Sussex.

Thirsty Spiders

In a recent broadcast I heard somebody say that the large spiders sometimes found in baths and wash basins come up through the pipes. Many

people believe this, but I am sure they come in through the bathroom window, because when I've kept it closed, I find no spiders.—Mrs. E. Stewart, Bucks Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

"Spiders, which cannot swim, don't climb up through the waste pipes," says a naturalist. "They come from inside the house—from attics and other places—in the evenings to feed. They must drink, and they go to the bath in search of moisture."

Night Visitor

One night I awoke suddenly and felt warm, moving fur against my feet. I turned down the bedclothes and a dark, child-like form bounded across the room and out of the window. My family thought I had dreamed it all, and "Mummy's animal" was a joke all day.

The next night it happened again. Frightened this time, I turned on the light to glimpse a disappearing furry back. A keeper at the zoo suggested that it might have been a lost marmoset, which would live in the open during the day and come in for company and warmth during the night. It came twice more, but was then presumably recaptured.—Grace Benny, London, S.W.16.

The Silent Killer

During one weekend, three families died through gas-pipe leakages, and two sons of another family were saved only because the noise of one of the boys falling out of bed attracted his father's attention.

Surely our scientists could evolve a warning device to give an alarm when the amount of coal gas in the air reaches a dangerous proportion.—C. A. Oswell, Nottingham.

In 1931 there were 175 accidental deaths from coal-gas poisoning; in 1951, 580; and in 1955, 892. The British Medical Association sub-committee which arrived at these figures has made eighteen recommendations, which include reducing the carbon monoxide content of coal gas, and giving gas a more distinctive or pungent smell.

Cruelty On The Bill

I was in show business for many years and I know that the conditions under which animals live and travel are appalling ("Free Speech," December 1).

Professional show people hated being on the bill with animals, and we would go in twos and threes to a box office, ostensibly to book front stalls for parties. Just as the tickets were to be handed over, we would say, "You have no animal turns on, of course." When we were told that they had, we would refuse the tickets.—Mrs. Beatrice Ernest, Catford, London, S.E.6.

"We oppose the captivity of all wild animals, and their training and exhibition for entertainment," says the R.S.P.C.A. "Even in large zoos like Whipsnade, animals, although enjoying comparative freedom, don't enjoy natural surroundings or climatic conditions."

Prodigal Charities?

Several times recently I have heard people say that of every penny collected in charity appeals, only a

farthing reaches those for whom the collection is being made. If this is so, there must be an enormous amount of superfluous "red tape" in our charitable organizations.—W. G. P., Lee, London, S.E.12.

There were twenty-one flag days in the London area last year and the expenses of the charities concerned averaged 13.2 per cent of the total collected. The highest proportion of expenses entailed by any one charity was twenty-five per cent, and the lowest 2.7.

No Connection

The people who had a special train put on by British Railways when they looked like being stranded ("Free Speech," November 24) were lucky indeed.

I was among a hundred passengers who arrived at one large station faced with a four-hour wait at two in the morning, because our train arrived half an hour late.

The station master, snug in his warm office, contemptuously turned his back on passengers who went to inquire, refused to give an explanation and showed them the door.—R. J. Stark, Falkirk, Stirlingshire.

"Alternative arrangements are made at the station master's discretion," says British Railways. "He will have to consider how many people are involved, where they want to go and what transport is available. A station master will generally explain in such circumstances, but where a passenger feels dissatisfied he should report the matter immediately to regional headquarters."

Another Income Tax

It would be fairer if our rates were assessed in the same way as income tax—at a certain percentage of earnings. This applies in Scandinavian countries. If this happened, there wouldn't be all this talk about big wage earners living cheaply in council houses. In my own borough, an enormous number of large old houses have been up for sale for months, the rates being too high for the ordinary purchaser, although the prices of the houses themselves are reasonable.—J. B., Leasowe, Wirral, Cheshire.

In Sweden and Denmark, state and municipal taxes are paid in a lump sum into the national exchequers, from which local authorities are then allocated their share.

Norway at present requires the two taxes to be paid separately, but it will adopt the Swedish and Danish system on January 1.

Fixing The Festivals

It is about time Christmas Day was fixed—as a Sunday, which is the most fitting day for a religious festival. And many people would welcome an end to the inconvenience of Christmas falling between two normal weekends.

It would have to be the last Sunday but one in the year to obviate Christmas Day falling on New Year's Eve, which might make some people feel they were being robbed of another occasion for celebration.—L. B., Tredegar, Mon.

If the proposed World Calendar were introduced, Christmas Day would always fall on a Monday, and New Year's Day would always be a Sunday. An extra day, known simply as "World's Day," would be interposed between Saturday, December 30, and Sunday, January 1.

Too Realistic

On television recently, the camera went out to the South Goodwin lightship. We were watching the

programme and my son was terribly sick and had to go to bed.

It reminded me of a friend who was reading a book about mountaineering and fainted when she read about the severe hardships suffered by the climbers.—M. W., Halifax.

"Seasickness is usually caused by the motion of a ship," says a doctor, "but there is also a considerable psychological element, and movement on the television or cinema screen is often enough to upset some people, perhaps especially children.

"In extreme cases, people who go aboard a ship which is quite still in harbour may come off feeling sick, merely because they expected to do so."

Warmer Homes

Why are chimneys often built on the outside walls of houses? It seems to me that it would be better if they could be in the centre, so that the heat radiates throughout the house. A lot of heat must be wasted on outside walls.—Mrs. D. Capithorne, Lambeg, Northern Ireland.

"Houses would be 25 per cent warmer if the flue were built inside the house," says the Building Research Station. "We recommend the building industry to build them away from outside walls and many more builders are doing so."

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

ONCE and for all, Mays's terrible twins are going to find out the truth about Santa Claus. . . . A trip wire will soon prove whether there's any substance in those yarns about reindeer and jingling bells and bushy beards. But whether the visitor is fatherly fact or furry fiction his welcome should floor him. Mays, incidentally, hopes his cover won't give too many curious youngsters impish ideas. As he says, a man who measures his length on the bedroom floor is quite likely to measure the span of his hand on a couple of pairs of pyjama trousers. And that's no way to start Christmas morning.

SEE PAGE 28 FOR RESULT OF COVER CONTEST NO. 10

Grandfather and the Golden West

by BARRY PEROWNE

When he saw the juke-box, Mr. Cumber's heart sank. Would he hear that tune again? He held his breath as the dapper man inserted a coin

Mr. Cumber thought
he knew all about this
wild and wonderful world.
But nobody ever
told him that juke-boxes
were a part of it . . .

PERCIVAL CUMBER, a tall but frail old Englishman with a neat, grey beard, felt out of touch with his surroundings. He was dressed for travelling, in a light suit, and carried a battered tweed hat. Now he was standing in a subterranean bus station under the forty floors of a New York skyscraper.

Down the ramps into the station poured the dazzle and roar of crowded streets. Towering over Mr. Cumber was the transcontinental bus, a streamlined monster, in which he was to travel. All round him were batteries of soda fountains and bookstalls stacked with newspapers.

It was the International Geophysical Year—1957. The headlines of the newspapers proffered excited speculation as to the date of the launching, from the deserts of New Mexico, of an artificial satellite into orbit about the planet.

Such matters meant nothing to Mr. Cumber. There remained in the world only one thing which he wished to see, and, thanks to his granddaughter, Letty, he had already travelled far on his way

towards seeing it. He groped for his eyeglasses and peered round for her.

He was reassured to see her standing nearby. He had no doubt whatever that she was the prettiest thing that walked the earth. She was nineteen. Her hair had an amber sheen. She was slim and trim in a crisp summer dress. With flowers and magazines cradled in her arms, she was talking to the expansive man whom she had introduced to her grandfather as "Mr. Ropp, from the office."

The office was that of a motion picture corporation. Letty had played parts in films in England. They had been quite small parts, but, all the same, Mr. Cumber had seen her described once in a newspaper as a "starlet." The term had puzzled him, but on the whole he had been rather taken with it.

Now Letty was on her way to fulfil a modest contract in Hollywood, bringing her only relation, her grandfather, with her. She was telling Mr. Ropp all about him.

"Why we wanted to travel by bus, Mr. Ropp," Letty was saying, "is so that Grandfather can creep up sort of gradually on what it is that he wants to see so much. Travelling by plane makes everything so abrupt. There's no build-up, as you say in the office, and Grandfather just doesn't want to miss a single thing. All his life, you see, he's earned his living by writing stories about the Far West, and I wanted him to——"

"What, *our* West?" exclaimed Mr. Ropp, looking askance at the presumptuous Englishman.

"Think of all the reams *your* writers write about *our* history," retorted Letty, always quick in her grandfather's defence.

"You've made your point," Mr. Ropp conceded, after a moment's reflection. "So he writes about the West."

"But never until now," said Letty, "when he's virtually retired, has he had a chance actually to *see* it.

"You can imagine, Mr. Ropp, how happy and grateful I am about this contract of mine, which has made it possible for Grandfather to see the West at last. And you can imagine what the trip means to him, when every week for more than fifty years he's written an entire number of the *Sheriff Hunter Fourpenny*, and never missed a single issue."

"He did that?" exclaimed Mr. Ropp. "Why, the old longhorn! He certainly deserves his trip. Certainly does!"

"After a lifetime," said Letty, "just sitting there in his little house in Norfolk, writing and writing away in longhand about Sheriff Hunter in the Far West, just *living* there in his mind, you know, enjoying every word. Poor Grandfather was absolutely lost when the paper finally gave up, a year or two ago. But now he's going to see the Far West with his own eyes, as he's always wanted."

"Well, I certainly hope he finds what he's looking for, Letty," said Mr. Ropp warmly. "Certainly do. But you'd better be taking your seats now," he added, and he cupped one hand under Letty's arm, the other under Mr. Cumber's. "Come, sir," he said, in his expansive way.

At the door of the bus, some discussion was going on between the driver, examining tickets, and a lean, intellectual-looking man in a black suit and felt hat, who carried a worn briefcase and a thick, rubber-tipped stick.

"I'm to have the rear seat, the whole of it," the man in black insisted. "I have a stiff leg. I have to keep it out straight. I explained at the office. Look at the ticket. You'll see I paid extra for taking up double space. They guaranteed me the rear seat the whole way to Albuquerque."

"Okay, sir," the driver said. "Go ahead."

The man in black climbed up with difficulty into the bus. The driver examined the tickets which Letty held out to him. Mr. Cumber shook hands cordially with Mr. Ropp.

Through the station boomed a voice, hollowly amplified: "Westbound passengers! Last call for the West!"

It rang in Mr. Cumber's ears like a flourish of trumpets. *Last call for the West*, he marvelled. Enchanted, he climbed up into his seat, the first in the bus, and Letty sat down beside him.

The driver, a handsome young man immaculate in buff slacks and shirt, a maroon tie with a clasp, and a dashing cap rather like a fighter pilot's, counted his flock, then slid a plate bearing his name into a slot over his seat, and took the wheel.

Mr. Ropp from the office waved to Letty, clasping his hands above his head like a boxer, as the silver-hued bus nosed up the ramp, turned out cautiously into a flashing stream of yellow taxicabs, and, carrying the English starlet and her venerable grandfather, took the road to the Far West.

All that day the bus hummed smoothly at high speed along a broad straight highway. While Letty gazed from the window at filling-stations, motels, hamburger-stands and advertising signs, Mr. Cumber daydreamed of the

Only one person was left in the bus . . . the lame man in black. Mr. Cumber turned

ILLUSTRATED BY KENNETH WYNN

to Jim Eliot. "Sheriff," he said, "just ask that man why he's having no breakfast"

Lordsburg stagecoach rocking in a cloud of dust, with horses at full stretch, through the Dry Cochise.

Twilight was falling when the bus pulled up. The driver withdrew his nameplate thankfully from its slot, and announced: "You get thirty minutes for dinner here, folks, and a new driver."

"Are you enjoying it all, Grandfather?" asked Letty, as she helped Mr. Cumber down from the bus.

"I'm absorbed, my dear, absorbed," Mr. Cumber assured her.

As they joined their fellow passengers on high stools at the bus station restaurant, he removed his hat from his old grey head and looked vaguely for a convenient hook.

"Right here, sir," said a young man on the next stool.

He was a slim, long, loose-limbed young man with a pleasant face. He took Mr. Cumber's hat and hung it up; and, on the strength of the kindly act, promptly opened a conversation with Letty.

Mr. Cumber, left to sip his coffee and gaze round the restaurant with wonderment, saw one of the bus passengers, a thickset, swarthy man in a bright blue tropical suit, insert a coin in an article of furniture which stood against the wall. The article instantly lighted up, revealing innards where metal arms mysteriously groped. Mr. Cumber raised his eyeglasses for a closer look, then drew Letty's attention to the phenomenon.

"It's a juke-box, Grandfather," Letty said. She dismissed the blare which suddenly came from the object by saying: "Just an old last year's number," and resumed her conversation with the young man.

Mr. Cumber marvelled how she could do it. The noise from the juke-box muddled his thoughts. Nobody else seemed bothered by it. They seemed unaware of it. They went on talking away, especially Letty and the young man, whose name apparently was Bob Eliot. So absorbed were they in their conversation that, when they returned to the bus, Letty joined Bob in the seat behind Mr. Cumber's.

Mr. Cumber was thankful to be out of range of the juke-box, and happy that Letty had found a congenial acquaintance. He beamed up benevolently at their reflection, chattering away together, in the mirror over the driver's seat.

Behind them, he could see, in the mirror, the other passengers, sitting in pairs each side of the gangway, all down the bus. Right at the rear was the man in black, with the stiff leg. He sat all by himself, for there was only the one double seat there, the other side of the gangway being occupied by the box, like an upright coffin, of the toilet.

The scene blacked out as the new driver, who had a relief driver sitting beside him—evidently they worked in pairs at night—switched off the interior lights. Mr. Cumber looked at the road stretching ahead. Its unending stream of headlights and the rainbow dance of neons gave him a momentary misgiving. He wondered whether this arrow-straight ribbon of pulsating brilliance really could be the road to the Far West of which he had written so happily all his life.

But the journey was telling on him. He dozed. His right hand began to twitch, as though holding an invisible pen. He was off again on a new Sheriff Hunter adventure. Page after page of foolscap flowed from under his dream-pen before a loud voice jerked him back from the happy hunting grounds and he woke in the great bus standing motionless in the middle of nowhere.

"Ten minutes for coffee, folks."

The interior lights had been switched on. They dazzled Mr. Cumber's eyes. He felt Letty's lips brush the top of his head. "You stay here, Grandfather. I'll bring some coffee out to you."

"No, no," said Mr. Cumber. "Beginning of the West. Mustn't miss it."

"Quite a way to go yet, sir," said Bob Eliot.

All the same, as Mr. Cumber stepped down from the bus, there was not a light to be seen except the neons of the small restaurant before which they were halted. His spirits responded to a sense of space about him.

"That poor man with the stiff leg doesn't seem to have got off," said Letty. "If he's awake, he might like someone to bring him some coffee. I'll go and ask him."

Mr. Cumber went on into the restaurant with Bob. A juke-box was jangling. It was that old last year's number again. Mr. Cumber wondered how people could endure it in the middle of the night. He looked with distaste at the passenger responsible, not the man in the bright blue tropical suit this time, but a big, bulky individual in crumpled white, with a cropped head and pale, pink-rimmed eyes.

Letty rejoined them. "He didn't want any coffee," he said. "He seemed rather odd and strained. He looked as though he hasn't slept a wink."

They had scarcely finished their coffee when the driver called: "All aboard, folks!"

There was another coffee halt at dawn. As he entered the restaurant, Mr. Cumber looked around nervously. His heart sank as he saw that

Continued on page 23

A tonic in their ears

Lauri Lucena's broadcasts cheer hospital life. He even inspired a crippled girl to walk

by PETER JACKSON

Brian Powell, a commentator on the hospital "radio," seeks women's ideas for better programmes. Broadcasts give local news, and include messages from patients' relatives

Occasionally, Lucena arranges broadcasts from the wards. In a show from an orthopaedic hospital, patients jangled harness to accompany a local crooner singing "Chain Gang"

EARLY one misty morning last March, a Gloucestershire farmer saw Lauri Lucena, head of Bristol's hospital broadcasting service, stalking one of his prize dairy cows with a tape recorder.

"Once he was convinced that I wasn't using anything so sinister as a geiger counter," says Lucena, "the farmer proved an enthusiastic sound effects assistant." Lucena had driven into the country within minutes of hearing that a little girl was seriously ill in a local sanatorium, and was asking to be allowed to visit a farm.

With the farmer's help, he was soon back in his office with a full collection of animal noises. These were built up into a programme in which he invited the sick child to join him on a trip to a farm. Later that afternoon, the little girl pressed a set of bedside headphones tightly against her ears.

Coming over the permanent network of Post Office land-lines, which links eighteen hospitals with a central transmitter, was the atmosphere of a farmyard, from the squelch of gumboots in the mud to a baleful comment by the dairy cow. The climax of the visit was an inspection of the hen-house—and at that exact moment the little girl found six new-laid eggs, still stuck with straw, on her pillow.

"To provide the final touch, the eggs were warm from the hen," says Lucena. "I had driven back to the city with them wrapped in steaming flannel on my lap. At the sanatorium a nurse had cradled them in her apron while waiting in the corridor outside. My mention of the hen-house in the programme had been carefully timed so that the nurse knew when to slip into the ward and place the eggs beside the young patient, who was lost in her imagination."

Such "timed entries" are fully exploited by forty-six year old Lucena and the business men, cricketers, journalists, policemen, schoolteachers and local government officers who also take part in this voluntary system of closed-circuit broadcasting. Learning that a girl who once lived only for dancing could not bring herself to walk again after years in hospital, they staged a programme from one of her old dancing haunts.

Microphones picked up the shuffle of feet and popping of balloons above the strains of her favourite tune. Then, as the patient heard herself announced as the winner of a competition dance, the ballroom manager walked up to her bed and presented the prize. Soon she was out of hospital and dancing at the ballroom herself.

BRISTOL is one of more than fifty cities and towns to have developed self-contained hospital broadcasting circuits to augment B.B.C. programmes with items of local interest. The organization, covering twenty-five hospitals in Manchester and Salford, recently flew two commentators to Germany to give an on-the-spot description of Manchester United playing in the European Cup. A patient can have a free fortnight's holiday on leaving hospital through winning a prize in a quiz programme.

At Birmingham, hospital broadcasts range from drama and symphony concerts to commentaries on every minute of first-class cricket played at Edgbaston throughout the summer. More than a hundred hospitals in the country share a *Meet The Stars* programme specially recorded at London theatres by Charlie Chester, Alma Cogan, Max Wall, Norman Wisdom, Danny Kaye and other top artists. Making a guest appearance in one of these shows, Hollywood actor Fernando Lamas put over a "Get well soon" message—and explained afterwards that his wife, Arlene Dahl, had just been admitted to an English hospital

The postwar expansion of hospital broadcasting networks originated one Saturday afternoon in February, 1949, when a record crowd of 51,385 packed Fratton Park, Portsmouth, for an F.A. Cup match with Derby County. Five thousand fans locked outside threatened trouble until Police-Sergeant (now Superintendent) Brian

Pupils from a music school record a show. Once Lucena (right) made recordings in a submarine

E. H. Winterflood, one of the broadcast team, interviews Gracie Fields for a hospital relay

Morrissey used an improvised loudspeaker system to send a running commentary on the play over the outer walls of the ground.

Morrissey's overflow broadcasts became a regular feature of all big matches at Portsmouth and in 1951, when the B.B.C. reduced its Saturday afternoon football coverage, he successfully suggested that his commentaries should be relayed to local hospitals by Post Office landlines during every home game. The Portsmouth experiment was soon taken up at Plymouth, and Bristol was only a few months behind with commentaries alternately from the Rovers and City grounds.

An immediate reaction was that maternity homes reported a Saturday afternoon rush of husbands. "After handing over their grapes, they seize the bedside headphones and sit there shouting," complained one matron. Within twenty-four hours of the Rovers announcing that all tickets had been sold for a Cup-tie, a doctor had visits from three perfectly fit football fans who told of vague troubles and hopefully suggested a weekend in hospital for observation.

The original set-up continued for fifteen months. Then Lucena became a hospital patient himself for thirteen weeks. "Listening in bed, Saturday after Saturday, I decided the service was being spoilt by the use of enthusiastic but inept amateur broadcasters," he explains.

Within a week of leaving hospital, he had reduced the number of commentators from eighteen to nine, and warned those retained to improve their standard. His theory was that the patients are in a particularly helpless position as listeners, and must not be subjected to third-rate stuff.

Lucena's spell in hospital had its most important consequences in scrapping the policy which confined broadcasts to football. He pointed out that it was wasteful to use a permanent network only on Saturday afternoons. Sporting commentaries were steadily widened to take in boxing, floodlit rugby, dog-racing, wrestling, skittles, and even darts. Locally produced feature programmes were developed to the point where patients are now provided with an almost daily schedule of bedside broadcasts.

These include magazine programmes about Bristol people, a West Country news review, contributions by stars visiting the city, record requests, and special programmes for children. Lucena is already planning to give hospitals their own television shows through a closed-circuit channel.

The range of these activities has revealed unsuspected talent. Forty-four year old Philip Bristow, an insurance broker, who has always refused to own a wireless set, has found himself firmly established as a disc jockey, with fan-mail from as far afield as Africa and Canada.

Hearing that a mother in hospital was separated from her twins, he decided to broadcast a message from the children. He tracked them down to a welfare home, and found that they were only three months old. Undaunted, he set up his equipment to put over their gurglings, but the twins froze into silence when he produced the microphone.

After half an hour's prodding, pinching and tickling failed to produce a single noise, Bristow stuck the microphone before two babies lustily squawking in adjoining beds. He reasoned that no one could identify such young children. But when the mother wrote to thank him for going to such trouble she added: "What a pity you could not find my *own* babies!"

LUCENA produces most of these programmes, and carries on an impulsive search for something new in bedside entertainment. When four Londoners asked the way to a public house in Bristol late one night, they casually mentioned that they had visited a friend in hospital and had been introduced to a local publican in the next bed. Lucena put the four men in his car, drove them to the public house and then, to their astonishment, set up a microphone in the bar. Five minutes after his arrival, he was leading a sing-song, which was later broadcast over the hospital network, along with messages to the licensee from his regular customers.

During the winter of 1954, Lucena plunged through deep snow drifts to reach the Somerset village of Tickenham and record an interview with a talking parrot belonging to a patient. "Unfortunately, it turned out to be a naval parrot," he recalls. "Its language was too bad to put on tape."

A native of Worcestershire, Lucena was attracted to the stage as a young man, acting with Cedric Hardwicke and Maurice Denham at Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and directing Richard Attenborough at Leicester. But it was as a business man that he moved to Bristol in 1946. Now he leads a double life, a company director at his desk, and a producer of hospital programmes anywhere he can take his tape recorder.

In March, 1955, he went underwater to feature the crew of the submarine Subtle. The frequency of the submarine's electricity proved to be different from that of the land supply, however. Back in the studio, he found that the tape was passing through the machine too fast, giving the bearded sailors soprano voices. He overcame the fault by sticking tiny pieces of plaster on the recorder's capstan-wheel until the speed had slowed down to normal.

Whenever possible, programmes from hospitals are broadcast "live," and Lucena tries to get the patients to join in. During a concert from an orthopaedic hospital early this year, patients jangled the harness dangling above their beds to provide an accompaniment for a local crooner's rendering of "Chain Gang."

The network's annual expenses, more than £1,000, are met by collections at football grounds and by a voluntary levy among factory workers. More than 40,000 patients a year listen in to the bedside broadcasts, and during a Royal visit to Bristol last April the Queen made use of the network to send a special message to patients.

Doctors, who often request records to brighten up patients immediately before operations, consider that the bedside broadcasts have definite therapeutic powers. The network also proved to be of practical value when a hospital laundry, handling 35,000 articles a week, broke down late one Friday. Four maintenance men went on strike when asked to work through the weekend, explaining that they did not want to miss the Bristol City match.

"The situation was at a deadlock until someone remembered us and offered to put a loudspeaker extension in the laundry," says Lucena. "The workmen called off the strike and on hearing a City victory finished the job with enthusiasm. Thanks to our commentators, the patients listened to the next week's programmes between clean sheets." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

Soccer's all-star showmen

by JOHN GRAYLING

Bob Jackson's famous veterans revel in slapstick and skill. Their tactics please crowds—and win matches

THE lady mayor was there only from a strict sense of duty, her chain of office glinting as she sat in the front row of the football stand. But for the soccer enthusiasts packing the small Peterborough United ground it was an evening to remember.

The big attraction was the first visit of the All Stars football team, a roving band of veteran players with some of the greatest names in the last quarter-century of soccer.

While waiting for the kick-off their manager Bob Jackson explained the importance of the occasion to the lady mayor. He pointed out that old internationals such as Carter, Hagan, Logie, Broome, Mercer, Scott, Barnes and Shankly are already only memories to followers of first-class football. In non-League areas like Peterborough they have always been a legend.

"How interesting," said the lady mayor. "But I am really not very keen on football."

A few minutes later the match was on and the All Stars, who included Stanley Matthews on this occasion, were indulging in their own brand of soccer showmanship, crisp shooting mingled with sleight-of-foot conjuring, subtle body swerves, and sheer slapstick which fooled the opposition and delighted the crowd.

Jackson turned to explain a stratagem to the lady mayor, and saw her on her feet, laughing and cheering. "From then on the town's first citizen behaved almost like a bobbysoxer at a variety show," he recalls.

More than a quarter of a million people were entertained by soccer's old troupers last year. And thirty-one present-day players gained practical assistance through larger benefit cheques from the £25,000 paid at the turnstiles. Ever since their formation four years ago, the All Stars have played only to raise money for the benefit funds of needy clubs and for football charities.

Team members receive only their expenses. "We turn out just for the fun of it," says Bill Shankly, the former Scottish wing-half who now manages Huddersfield Town. "After so many years of promotion, relegation, cup-ties and the tension of international matches, it is a treat to play football as a game."

Most of the All Stars are engaged in club management, and sometimes they have been billed as the "Managers XI." When one stalwart arrived to play in a match last year, he confessed that he had been so harassed by his directors that he was about to leave soccer altogether. After ninety minutes of a typical carnival display he had recaptured all his old zest for the sport. At a board meeting next day he was forceful enough to win the promise of a free hand in team selections.

Jackson knows for himself the fluctuations of life as manager of a League club. When he took up a £2,500-a-year post with Hull City in 1952, he had earlier steered Portsmouth to two successive First Division championships and to the semi-final of the F.A. Cup. Three years later, after struggles on the brink of relegation, he became embittered and disillusioned as his connection with Hull ended in an action for breach of contract.

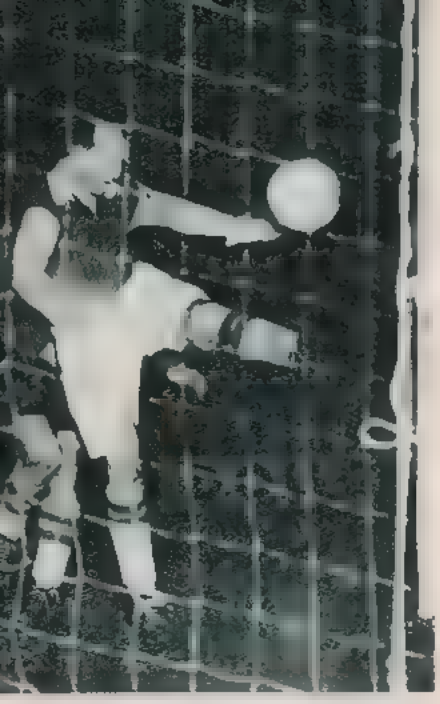
Now he draws only a few pounds a month to cover the cost of organizing All Stars' fixtures, yet rates himself the happiest manager in football. "I may have no wages account in the bank, no ground and no kit, but I also have no directors and no League table worries," he explains. Jackson feels bound by only one obligation: "To give the public a show they will not forget."

This policy has brought about a blend of skill and comedy. "Most of our tactics can be traced to the unlikeliest sources," says Jackson. The more spectacular ball juggling is "sheer Palladium stuff," and some of the All Stars' elaborate free-kick manoeuvres could originate on the chessboard.

For a time the team exploited a two-man penalty-kick plan. Peter Doherty deliberately sliced the ball to the left, and Charlie Mitten ran up from behind to hit it into the net. This proved extremely successful; most goalkeepers went sprawling on the ground in anticipation of a direct shot from Doherty while Mitten scored easily. Then in a match last January, Doherty's "unexpected" penalty pass was coolly intercepted by a home defender. "I was up at Doncaster the other week and saw you try that same trick," he grinned. Now the All Stars are working to perfect a three-man spot-kick.

Soccer's showmen have a flair for taking

Average age of the All Stars team is more than forty. It includes former internationals such as game a terrier ran on to the field. When Stanley Matthews (centre) got the ball he dribbled



In a floodlit game, Barnes clears from the goal line. The All Stars usually play only evening matches, and give profits to charity

An autograph hunter is escorted away before a match against Crystal Palace. In many towns All Star players have never been seen before

advantage of the unexpected. During a match on November 5, centre-forward Jack Rowley was racing into the penalty area when someone in the crowd tossed a firework on to the pitch a few yards to his right. Although moving at top speed, he swerved towards it and put in a fierce drive as the firework exploded. "The ball left his foot in a shower of sparks," says Jackson, "and those spectators who didn't see the firework must have gone home convinced that Rowley had dynamite in his boots."

Playing at Queen's Park Rangers' ground last March, Matthews added an unusual stooge to his act when a white-haired terrier repeatedly ran on to the field. Matthews dribbled along in the dog's shadow, keeping its body between himself and the full-back. "The crowd really enjoyed that little interlude," says Jackson.

Such light-hearted lapses may cost the All Stars several matches, but their artistry wins them many more. Kicking-off for the second half of a game with Crystal Palace last year, Trevor Ford passed the ball to Jimmy Hagan and the inside-forward went straight through the entire home team, slipping the ball between the goalkeeper's legs, running it into the net, and then dribbling it back to the centre-spot for the re-start, without an opponent touching the ball. The All Stars went on to win 6-5.

Doherty (left) and Carter (right). In one along behind the dog, fooling an opponent

Although delighting the crowd and introducing light relief with occasional individualistic spells, the All Stars lay most stress on team work. They seek to show that the much-vaunted Continental style is only an imitation of prewar English soccer. "Our usual plan is to keep possession of the ball for as long as possible, without any one player holding on to it," Jackson explains. "We gain ground—and save our legs—by pushing the ball about from man to man, depending on intelligent positioning and accurate passes."

In addition to entertaining spectators, the All Stars' exhibitions prove of value to their opponents. Five days after being beaten 2-7 by the All Stars, Crystal Palace recorded their biggest League win of the season away from home—"the direct result of a first-hand lesson in positional play," says manager Cyril Spiers.

The All Stars frequently exaggerate their advanced years. At half-time in one of their early games, they solemnly approached the home captain and suggested that there should be no interval. "Surely, you are not *that* fit," he said, with open admiration.

"Oh no," replied Bill Shankly, "but if we stop playing now our tired old bones will probably set rigid, and we shall never be able to move again." Shortly afterwards a plan for the team to take the field in bathchairs was vetoed by a referee.

The All Stars have now been affiliated to the Football Association, and next year will have their own colours, old gold with black shorts. The team was born in the glare of floodlights before Doncaster's biggest-ever night-time attendance on October 21, 1952. "The scene in the dressing-room was as excited as a schoolboys' reunion," goalkeeper Frank Swift recalls.

Organization was in his hands until the end of last year when the team's affairs were then taken over by Jackson, a Bolton man who scored three hundred goals in non-League football as an inside-forward. Jackson became a scout for Bolton Wanderers in 1934, and manager of Portsmouth in 1946. It was at Fratton Park that Jackson first revealed a taste for soccer showmanship, entertaining the crowd at half-time with crooners, acrobats and dancing girls instead of the traditional brass band.

Jackson travelled to Exeter last January for his first match as All Stars manager. He soon found that injuries are only a minor complication in fielding a team from a registered playing strength of seventeen. Board meetings, scouting missions, and transfer deals all prevent the veterans from appearing.

Within twenty minutes of the kick-off at Exeter, he had only ten players. Then he caught sight of Ted Bates, Southampton's team manager and one-time forward, standing among the crowd. Bates was rushed to the dressing room, given a pair of boots, and was soon playing in the match he had come to watch.

"Our players often find great difficulty in turning up," says Jackson. "But in their keenness to play they go to great lengths to make it." When Wilf Mannion missed the Humber ferry on his way from Hull to a match at Grimsby, he hired a tug to take him across and played in the second half.

The All Stars can meet only a fraction of the seventy requests for fixtures received each year, and have had to turn down invitations to tour Spain, Italy, and Switzerland—where they are known as "The Professors." But they wound up last season with a visit to Ireland, where they drew 6-6 with the Irish League side which had beaten a representative English XI by five goals to two.

After this triumph, Jackson was shocked when the All Stars found themselves losing 0-4 to Third Division Mansfield in their opening game of this season. He went to the dressing-room and delivered a strong pep talk. "The result may not matter," he stormed, "but you're disgracing your own memory with such listless play." In a thrilling second-half, the veterans came back to make the final score 5-6, and almost equalized in the last seconds.

"The crowd gave them a big hand as they came off," says Jackson. "Only then did I see the funny side of my half-time lecture. It was a football fan's dream come true. I had a collection of the country's top managers sitting with bowed heads while I told them what I thought of them."

THE END

SAPPHIRES ON WEDNESDAY

by MALCOLM GAIR

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT SITTON

Audie knew where to find Miro's secret. She could save Mark's life -unless his enemies got there first

A LOOK of shock twisted Audie Malatino's face. "*Miro* shot *Tony?*" Mark Raeburn nodded. "Yes. He fired three times. Tony was dead before he hit the ground. . . ."

Mark, a British private detective, knew that in coming to Audie he was taking a terrific gamble. He was on the run, framed for a murder he had n't committed. . . . She *had* to believe him.

Mark had met Audie only once before, and very briefly, in England -at the home of her aunt, Mme Malatino, for whom he was undertaking an assignment.

Sitting in Audie's house in May Harbor, New York, he explained how Mme Malatino and her brother, Miro Ablondi, had framed him for the murder of their nephew, Tony. His whole assignment, he now realized, had been part of this elaborate frame-up.

"But *why*," Audie said, "for God's sake, why?"

I don t know why," Mark said. He described how, after the shooting, he had overcome Miro and locked him in the cellar of the Ablondi house.

The floor swung upwards like a trapdoor, revealing a large safe. "It's enormous," Audie gasped. "Yes," said Mark grimly. "Miro has a lot to hide."

a few miles away. "Then I came to you because I thought you might know something that would help. . . . You know them both. You knew Tony. What's behind it? Where is the answer?"

"I don t think it's here." Audie spoke slowly, with concentration. She explained that Miro rented Tony's property in Italy—some land, and a villa. "I'm absolutely certain the answer lies in Italy." Mark sat in silence, full of bitter frustration. So that was that. There was nothing he could do to clear himself . . Italy. It might as well be the moon. . . .

And, at that moment, the doorbell rang

PART THREE

A Corpse In Milan

IT was a startling noise, not because it was loud, but because of what it was. The bell gave a long *brrr* and then was silent. Mark, who had noticed when he entered the room that it had two doors, glanced at the other one.

"Go through there," Audie said. "Up the stairs, and wait." She was a little pale, but quite self-possessed.

"If it's the police?" he asked.

"I'll cover up and get them away."

Mark hurried from the room and up a flight of stairs to the first floor. The room he found himself in was in semi-darkness because the shutters were still up. He sat down on a sofa, and waited.

He did not have long to wait. The door below opened and Audie ran lightly up the steps. Her shirt and jeans looked very dark in the hall light, and her face was pale. She opened a door beside him and pushed him through, rapidly and quietly.

"Listen," she said. "It s Mr. Shreburn. He's our family lawyer. He's come down to open up his house here, and this is just a social call. I was wondering—should I tell him what s happened? I think he'd believe me and he could help us a lot."

Mark thought rapidly. "No," he said. "As a lawyer he would be bound to tell me to go to the police. It's the only advice he could possibly give. And I'm not going to do that. I'm getting out of this by getting Miro into it."

Audie didn't argue. "All right," she said. "I'll get rid of him as soon as I can."

She went downstairs again. Ten minutes passed. Then Mark heard her call, and went back to the drawing-room. He smelled cigar smoke.

"I've been thinking," Audie said. "Wouldn t it be best if we went straight to Idlewild and caught the first plane for Milan?"

"Of course it would be best. Could we do it?"

Why not?"

"For one thing, there's the item of the fares. I don't have more than about fifty dollars. Do you have the rest?"

Audie looked at him. She seemed embarrassed.

"Yes," she said. "I have the rest. You don t realize—there s no reason why you should.—I've got the rest of two million. . .

They left almost at once, in Audie's Cadillac, with Mark at the wheel. The big car pitched and rolled along the dirt road like, Mark thought, the Manhattan in a heavy sea.

"Slow," said Audie, "for the village."

Mark lifted his foot and, as the woods stopped flying past on either side and he dropped to a crawl, felt a kind of animal fear. He was actually getting nearer to, not farther away from, the scene of the murder.

"Mark—how long do you reckon Miro has food for?" Audie asked.

The question irked him, not because he was worried about Miro, but because he didn't want to think about him, or about the cellar he was locked in, or about the studio and Tony s body. He only wanted to think about getting away.

"A week," he said. "I put lots of tins down in the cellar and a tin opener, bread and butter and rusks and fruit juice, salami and bananas. He'll get out, or someone will find him before he's got through that. Just so that he stays there, long enough for us to get out of the country, that s all that matters."

They were in the middle of the village now. Mark saw a row of shops, a white church, white railings. Audie said nothing more.

"Don't worry," he said. "We could always send a cable to the local police." He forced himself to speak gently.

They were through the village now, and he put his foot down again. It had been Audie s idea that he should drive. She had lent him clothes and a suitcase that had belonged to her father. He was wearing a charcoal-grey summer suit now. It fitted him loosely, but well enough.

"Listen," he said suddenly. "You loathe Madame Malatino, don't you? Why?"

Audie didn't answer at once. Then she said: "Well, I guess I just do. I think she's hard and mean—and worse, dangerous and evil. But I suppose I loathe her just as much because she's inconsiderate and overbearing and rude to people in shops."

"And Miro?"

There was no hesitation this time. "Miro's a megalomaniac," Audie said. "You can really imagine him burning down a house just to warm his feet. He simply couldn t understand why anything else should count when he's involved."

"I see." Mark pulled the Cadillac out to pass a station wagon. "When I came to you this afternoon, I wondered what would happen if you refused to believe me. I see I needn't have worried."

Audie said: "Maybe you think I'm talking like that about Miro because I know he shot Tony? And of course I don t mean I ever thought Miro would really do a thing as bad as that. But I did know he was really wicked."

She fumbled in her bag and produced a pack of cigarettes. Mark refused one, and caught a glimpse of her face as her lighter flared, it was only a glimpse, but it seemed to him that she looked quite relaxed. They drove on in silence.

As they turned in at the gates of the airport, Mark sighed with relief. He had driven fast and, while he was normally a relaxed and easy driver, on this journey he had once or twice found himself hunched, tense and stiff, over the wheel.

After their opening conversation neither he nor Audie had spoken very much, and for the last hour she had said nothing except to give directions.

"Over there," she said, "you can park. Then we ll see what we can get on." Obviously the business of flying to Italy meant very little to her: about as much as it meant to him to take the Flying Scotsman from London to Edinburgh.

MARK was not only impressed: he was jealous. To drive from Long Island to Idlewild, in a Cadillac, and catch the first plane to Italy; that was just the kind of thing he wanted to do, had always dreamed of doing.

And now it was happening, and everything about it was wrong. He was running away from a frame-up, and the whole thing was being organized and paid for by a girl in whose eyes he was just the "hired man." In the depths of Mark s Scottish soul a devil of dour black pride went to work.

Audie knew nothing about this. She was quite at ease. She knew where to go, whom to see. She was dressed simply for travelling in a dark green costume, and Fifth Avenue, Bond Street and the rue de la Paix had all contributed to the effects. She had been frightened and shocked, but the fast journey through the darkness, the normal process of reaction, and, above all, the sense of Mark s protection, had now given her back her confidence.

"I know a man here," she said, "Ed Bruhwetter. He'll help us. Let's go along to him."

They walked over a sweep of gravel to a group of lighted buildings. Ed Bruhwetter, when they got in to see him in his office, turned out to be about sixty, a big, heavy, jovial, asthmatic man. His room was large and handsome: he was important.

"Why, Mrs. Malatino—Audie—it's swell to see you," Ed said heartily. "You re looking more beautiful than ever, if that s possible." He smiled.

"This is Mark Raeburn," Audie said. "He s from my lawyers in England. It seems the British tax people are trying to hang a period of British residence on me for tax purposes, and we have to collect some papers in Milan. It s all blown up suddenly, and we're in a hurry. Can you help?"

"I'm glad to know you, Mr. Raeburn." Bruhwetter shook Mark warmly by the hand. "How much of a hurry?" he asked Audie.

"We'd like to get on the first plane we can. Mr. Raeburn had a cable today. It seems it's all very urgent."

"I see." Mr. Bruhwetter wrinkled his brow. It made him look like some kind of dog. "Look—uh. Audie, I'll see what I can do. There's nothing direct to Milan until tomorrow morning. You might go by London or Paris. I don't know. Look, why don't you go and sit in the room next door? I believe there's nobody there now. Go and have some coffee, while I try and fix it."

The room next door was smaller than Mr. Bruhwetter's, and less expensively furnished. Audie sat in the armchair. Mark moved to

Continued on page 25

To Mark, a man on the run, the doorbell made an ominous sound. "Go through there," Audie said

Master mind on London River

by DAVID MILLWOOD

Up and down the busy Thames, Leslie Hookham pilots the world's ships. In the thickest fogs he guides them into narrow docks—and never looks at a chart

In a lock at Tilbury, Hookham keeps watch

Hookham boards a ship by rope ladder, and gives orders to tugs by pulling the whistle rope (right). On one trip the whistle fell from the funnel. The tugs carried on unaided

WHEN the tugs assigned to take a 15,000-ton cargo vessel up the Thames one foggy night last winter failed to appear, the Greek skipper became agitated. It was his first trip up the estuary, which is known among seamen as one of the trickiest in the world. Although he was responsible for the safety of his ship, navigational control of the vessel was in the hands of a spry, jaunty Thames river pilot named Leslie Hookham, who had come aboard at Gravesend to supervise the last twenty-three miles of the journey to a berth alongside Tower Bridge

Hookham's decision to press on without the tugs increased the captain's anxiety. Even if they could not make contact with the tugs assigned to them, Hookham reckoned on finding other tugs willing to do the job. Ordering "Slow Ahead" and maintaining a steady blare of sound on the fog-horn to warn other craft of their approach, he began the slow crawl up the narrowing channel

Before long, the fog thickened and reduced visibility to a few yards. On land, traffic was almost at a standstill, but the river was still busy. "Soon there were ships all round us and tugs everywhere," recalls Hookham, "but not one to spare for us."

There was no choice left to him now but to keep going in the hope of picking up a tug farther on. It was impossible to turn the ship round without tugs in the congested river and to stay put was equivalent to parking a ten-ton lorry in the middle of a busy highway

With the skipper gripping the rail and peering out over the side into the fog, the ship steamed steadily on. Hookham himself was now feeling the strain. "We had one nasty moment when we saw another big ship ahead with her steering lights on, indicating that she was under way. When we came closer it was obvious that, despite the lights, she was at anchor We slid past with only inches to spare."

Although during the war he had often worked without tugs, Hookham did not fancy the idea of attempting to berth without them. But he

from an American ship. Once he took an ice-breaker into a dock only a foot wider than the vessel

kept his concern to himself "the captain was worried stiff by this time."

One hour later, Hookham was still on the bridge, the captain was still at the rail and the ship was still under her own power within half a mile of Tower Bridge. The fog was like a dense cloud. Suddenly, a tug appeared

"We hailed her," says Hookham, "took a line aboard and berthed as if the whole operation had been carefully planned. I have never seen a man look more relieved than that skipper I was quite glad to step ashore myself."

Fog is a regular hazard faced by Thames pilots, but nervous skippers are seldom encountered, says Hookham. The reputation maintained by the 128 master mariners licensed by the Corporation of Trinity House as Thames river pilots is so high that some captains leave the pilot in command and go below

Whereas the job of navigating a large ship up or down the winding, congested waterway between Gravesend and the Pool of London would be a nightmare for many ocean-going captains, it is a matter of daily routine to a Thames pilot.

Hookham, a short, grey-haired seaman of fifty-one, has been making the same journey in different ships since 1939, reckons that he covers his beat two hundred and fifty times a year. He goes aboard at Gravesend from the pilots' launch, taking over from a sea pilot who has brought the ship up-river from the open sea.

Only small craft such as coasting colliers and light freighters can navigate the Thames without a pilot, and many skippers of ships for whom pilotage is not compulsory prefer to depend on a river pilot's knowledge and experience.

"A sea captain's judgment of shorter distances is often not so acute as that of a pilot, whose business it is to navigate in a restricted space," says Hookham.

Manoeuvres which the pilot regards as commonplace sometimes alarm sea-going skippers. Once, when Hookham was taking a small ship into South-West India Dock, he instructed the captain, who was acting as helmsman, to put the wheel hard to port, and added: "Keep her there whatever happens." He knew from experience that this berthing tactic, which involves heading the ship straight for the dock-side wall and then throwing the engines in reverse, can be alarming to the uninitiated.

On this occasion, when the skipper saw the wall rushing towards him and Hookham calmly doing nothing about it, he took matters into his own hands and swung the wheel hard to starboard to avoid what seemed to be an inevitable collision.

"The result, when the engine went into reverse, was that we swung over and berthed on the wrong side of the dock."

Another time, rather than alarm the skipper of a British built Russian ice-breaker which he was piloting up to London Docks for repairs, Hookham kept to himself the information that the dock was only one foot wider than the ship.

"When the skipper saw her nudging the wall one side, he ran up to me excitedly and said we were touching and what was I doing about it. I told him to go and look over the other side. He almost fell overboard when he saw how close we were."

According to Hookham, the more experienced a pilot becomes, the more leisurely is his pace of work. "Our principal concern is the safety of the ship. Speed does not matter." But the pilot must time his progress carefully, allowing for the draught of the ship and the capacity of the dock. The tide has a large rise and fall, and delay may mean anchoring until the next tide.

Pilots take advantage of radar and direction finding apparatus when these are available, but they rely mainly on their intimate knowledge of the river in all its moods and conditions. Many senior men work without charts. "I carry my charts in my head," says Hookham. "It is unreasonable to expect a skipper to have confidence in a pilot who is consulting the book all the time."

He gives instructions to tugs by whistle blasts. A few weeks ago, as he tugged the whistle-cord of a collier, the whistle, which was attached to the funnel, came adrift. "The cord twined itself round my neck and almost strangled me. Fortunately the tugs knew their job well enough to work without directions."

Hookham, the son of a sea pilot, is married, with one son, and lives at Gravesend. He went to sea at the age of fifteen as a cadet apprentice with a tramp steamer and spent fourteen years in cargo vessels trading in the Mediterranean. In 1930 he took his master's certificate. When the war came he was in the middle of his training as a Thames pilot.

For up to six months the trainee, who must be under thirty five and have five years' experience as a master or watch-keeping navigation officer works at his own expense with senior pilots to learn the ropes. Then follows a stiff oral examination. For the next three years he is restricted to the pilotage of small ships, and earns only small fees.

Earnings are based on the draught and tonnage of the vessels handled and the distance covered. For taking a 10,000-tonner of twenty-six feet draught from Gravesend to London Bridge a pilot receives a fee of £17—but he may have to wait all day at the pilots' office on the Royal Terrace Pier, Gravesend, for his ship to arrive unless he belongs to the top-ranking group of veterans known as selected pilots.

Selected pilots are retained by one or sometimes two shipping lines, which have first claim on their services; they earn on average about £2,700 a year. Hookham is retained by the Union Castle and United States lines. When neither line needs him he is available to go aboard any ship that comes along.

Hookham prefers piloting large ships for two reasons. They pay more and "the bigger the ship the easier your passage: everyone else gets out of your way." One of the largest craft he has ever brought up the Thames was a 29,000-ton aircraft carrier, which was squeezed into a narrow dock entrance without mishap, but wrought havoc ashore. The flight deck overhung the land on both sides. Although it cleared a row of lamp standards on the dockside, an obstruction on the underside of the deck flicked the lamps from their supporting arms and sent them crashing to the ground.

"It was wartime," says Hookham, "and no one bothered about the damage."

During the build-up for D-Day he was assigned to take a U.S. Liberty ship loaded with T.N.T. from Gravesend to the docks. After completing the trip safely in convoy with another similarly laden Liberty ship he was turned away from the docks, which were already full. In darkness he followed the other ship back down-river to seek an anchorage.

After passing a three-mile line of ships, he spotted a likely anchorage dead ahead. At that moment the leading ship dropped anchor, blocking the channel. "The day has not yet come," says Hookham wryly, "when you can put on the brakes and stop. A collision was unavoidable: we could only hope and pray that we would miss the cargo."

Fortunately the bow of Hookham's ship struck the stern of the anchored vessel. "If we had struck her amidships we would have been blown sky-high. As it was, we only took a couple of plates out of her stern."

In peacetime, a collision usually means an appearance in court for the pilot and another appearance before a Trinity House court of inquiry, which has the power to suspend or revoke his licence. But a collision, a few years ago, was an unexpected piece of good fortune for a colleague of Hookham's. For successfully beaching his ship, which had a valuable cargo, he was awarded £1,000 salvage money.

The relationship between captain and pilot is invariably one of mutual respect, says Hookham. "Captains are usually only too glad to tell us the faults and characteristics of their ships."

In accordance with this policy of frankness and co-operation Hookham decided, on his very first job as a fully fledged pilot, that he would not keep his recent qualification a secret. As soon as he climbed aboard he announced: "Captain, I am a brand-new pilot."

The captain grinned. "Pilot," he said, "I have news for you. I am a brand new captain."

THE END

JOHN HULL, PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

THE SMALL WOMAN (4)

Gladys falls in love —and becomes a spy

by ALAN BURGESS

Their love flourished in the shattered villages and bombed towns. For this man, and this country, she was risking her life

YANGCHENG, the little walled city in the mountains of Shansi in north China, was still smouldering from its first devastating air raid when, five days later, the victorious Japanese troops of Nippon came up over the mountain path from Tsehchow and entered a deserted city through the East Gate

Stories of their ruthlessness had preceded them. Out to the lonely villages and the mountain caves the people streamed, carrying what possessions they could

The governor of the prison and his guards assembled the convicts in chains and marched them off to a mountain village the mandarin, his wives and family moved to another isolated place nearby, Gladys Aylward with her small Christian community of about forty people left for Bei Chai Chuang, a tiny walled village of eight houses, which lay several miles away behind the mountain flanking the main mule trail

Gladys, a tiny, slightly built woman, had been a London parlourmaid A determination to be a missionary in China had brought her, almost penniless, to this hidden corner of the world which the Japanese were now invading When Yangcheng was bombed, it was Gladys who took charge of rescue work She had practised her preaching in Yangcheng, living simply never fearing anything—not even to quell, single-handed, a murderous riot in the city jail, So the feudal mandarin had become her friend, and the people called her Ai-weh-deh the virtuous one

Bei Chai Chuang lay on the side of a high peak No road led to it and the rocky terrain over which one passed to reach it left no track across the mountains In the hollows and clefts out of the wind, the villagers grew millet and maize, cotton and linseed, they tended their chickens and pigs, sheep and cows, and in season trapped the mountain game. No Japanese soldier ever discovered Bei Chai Chuang and lived to tell about it No Japanese soldier ever moved far from his main force during that cruel war, for every farmer was a guerrilla fighter

Gladys had many old friends in the village. She stayed at Bei Chai Chuang for over a week, and then further news reached her that the Japanese Army had passed through Yangcheng and disappeared down the trail

Gladys decided to go back to recover some property She had left the deeds of her house and various passes and papers buried in a box in the courtyard. She decided that Bei Chai Chuang was a safer place for them than Yangcheng

It took her several hours to reach Yangcheng, and she approached it cautiously As she came closer she could see that the West Gate was shut, she skirted the wall, clambering round the narrow apron of rock which dropped sheerly to the valley below, until she reached the East Gate

The houses outside the city were completely deserted, an air of eerie stillness seemed to hang over the entire town

It was late afternoon and the shadows were long when she walked down the narrow alley way to the Inn of Eight Happinesses which she had set up years before as a mission house, just outside the walls of Yangcheng. The inn sign still creaked in the wind, and it needed a new coat of paint She went from room to room it was as they had left it, the bombed corner of the building gaped to the sky

She took a piece of stick and began to grub in the earth in one corner of the courtyard to find the box. She had almost uncovered it when she sensed rather than heard movement at the entrance to the courtyard. She turned in alarm

IN the doorway, in his dirty tunic and trousers and round blue hat, stood the water carrier She knew him well He was an old man with a goatee beard, and a thin, sly face She didn't like him, she knew he was a thief and a wicked old man She wondered if he had stayed there during the short Japanese occupation, She wouldn't have put it past him. it was an ideal opportunity to loot.

"When are you leaving?" he asked in his croaky voice.

"Why should I leave? This is my home I shall sleep here or with one of my neighbours."

"There are no neighbours Everyone who has come back is in the town behind gates which are locked and bolted. You won't get in "

"What does that matter? I can sleep here. '

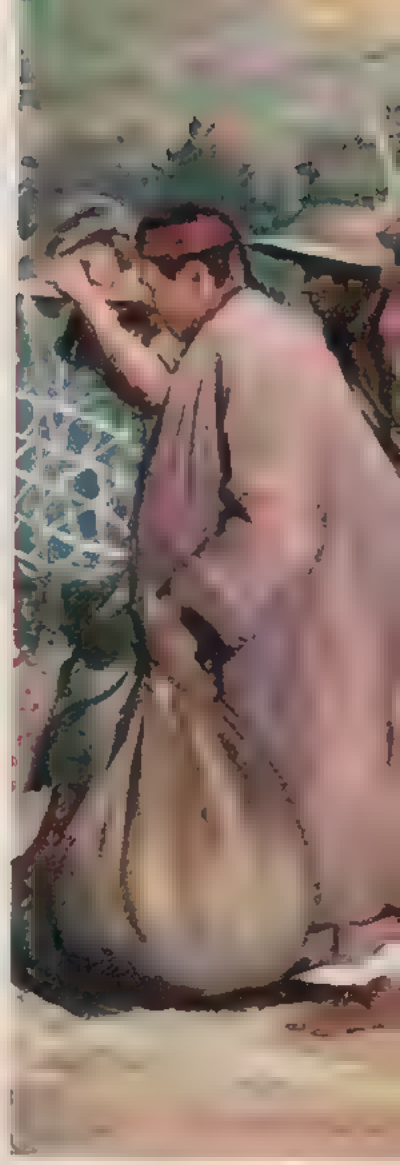
She scraped away the last of the dirt and lifted her deed box out of the hole

"The Japanese are coming back said the water carrier

"Are you trying to frighten me? Because you won t."

"They are already at the West Gate," he said with a snigger

"Rubbish!" began Gladys, and as if the word



Suddenly, Gladys A

was a cue for sound, at that precise moment a terrific explosion came from the other end of the town. It was so sudden and so startling that she dropped her box and ran. She scurried through the courtyard entrance, and as she ran a succession of other explosions added to her speed. She sped up the alleyway to the East Gate. It was locked and barred

It was no use going along the track eastwards that led to Tsehchow, which must be in enemy hands Bei Chai Chuang lay to the south west. She had to skirt the wall again and go in that direction.

She clawed her way over the boulders in the shadow of the wall The firing continued It was almost dusk As she rounded the last buttress, she came to an abrupt halt.

A battle was going on at the West Gate Beneath it, about fifty Japanese soldiers in light khaki uniforms were sprawled behind rocks, or out in the open, shooting up at the walls above the gate. On top of the wall she could see Chinese Nationalist soldiers firing back and occasionally tossing down a hand grenade

The small cemetery in which they had so recently interred the bombed dead lay between her and the battle. Gladys crept quietly into the shelter of its mounds and ornaments. She crouched there. Somehow, she had to pass

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN BERRY

ard knew what the sound was—planes diving on the column of refugees. She screamed at the children "Run, run! Into the fields! Throw yourselves flat!"

through that battle and make off to the west. If she waited until darkness she wouldn't be able to see, and she guessed that the main Japanese Army wasn't far behind this patrol.

These troops were so busy engaging the Chinese that they were paying no attention to their rear. Perhaps that was her chance? If she walked quietly round behind them, they might not even see her.

Across the trail was a small field of green wheat almost two feet tall. Gladys felt certain that if she could get into it she was safe. She stood up, released her pent-up breath, and walked quickly forward. She skirted behind the Japanese soldiers, and decided to run for it if one sprang up in front of her or from behind a boulder.

Nearing her objective, she could contain herself no longer, and with a mad run threw herself head first into the wheat field. She crawled rapidly away, reached the falling slope of the mountainside and, hidden, scampered along until she came to the main track westwards.

It led downwards until it reached a narrow rocky gorge, a mile from the city, which cut for some distance through the mountains. Both sides were sheer. In bad weather a rushing river streamed along the rocky bed, but in fine weather—as it was now—the bed of the stream was used as a highway, and the high, rocky path hacked into the cliffside ignored.

Supposing, she thought, *I meet another party of Japanese in the gorge. I shall be trapped! Which route will they use? The river bed or the high path?*

But now she was not frightened, only conscious that she needed help.

"You'll have to help me, Lord," she said aloud.

She closed her eyes and began to spin in a small circle, saying: "Whichever path I face when I stop, I shall take. D'you hear me, Lord? Whichever path I face when I stop turning, I shall go along."

She turned until she felt giddy and stopped facing directly up at the high path cut out of the side of the gorge overhead. She scrambled up and hurried along it.

She had gone perhaps half a mile, almost half way through to where the gorge swung sharply to the left, when she heard unmistakable noises from ahead and below, the sounds of an army on the march, wheels and feet and hooves clattering over stones. She threw herself flat on her face and peered over the edge of the canyon.

A feeling of relief that she had chosen the right path flooded through her. Part of the Imperial Army of Nippon was passing below. There were about five hundred men, with pack mules, and mule-drawn light artillery. She guessed that the guns would soon be trained on the gates of Yangcheng.

Next morning in the village she told them what had occurred at Yangcheng. The Bei Chai Chuang men made daily reconnaissances towards Yangcheng, and on the fifth day returned with good news. The gates were open, the town crier was parading along the tracks outside the city, banging his gong and shouting: "Will all citizens return and clear their courtyards?"

Gladys's small band were delighted. Obviously the Japanese had retreated towards Tsehchow; now they could return to their homes. Gladys herself was less confident.

She insisted that they all remain in the village until she had investigated. With one of the Bei Chai Chuang women accompanying her, she made the journey over the mountains again and down to the city. As they clambered down the rocks, she became more and more certain that horror lay inside those old walls.

The West Gate was open and they walked slowly under the arch. It was a city of the dead! A city of hollow-eyed corpses piled along the main street and in every alley-way.

Most had been bayoneted, very few shot. All

Children at Tsehchow head for shelter in an air raid. When the Japanese occupied the city, they brutally attacked Gladys

The town crier of Yangcheng calling the people to the West Gate. Orders by the mandarin were announced in this manner

along the streets, in the temples, in the bazaars, the bodies crouched or lay, some twisted grotesquely, others with a foot or a hand stretching into the air, women and children too. In the angular, disinterested rigidity of death, the bodies clogged the city

A small crowd huddled outside the *yamen*. Gladys pushed her way through, and in the inner chamber discovered the mandarin. His face was grey.

She came straight to the point. "They must be buried," she said flatly.

He nodded, passing a thin hand across his brow. Like Gladys, he had arrived at Yangcheng from a mountain village only that morning. He had heard what had happened. Like her, with no sign of the Japanese in the city, some of the citizens had returned to Yangcheng to pick up their lives where they had left off. But Chinese guerrilla troops had retreated into the city before the Japanese advance guard.

As he explained, Gladys nodded. She had seen the opening skirmishes of that action. Infuriated at the resistance, at being denied access, the Japanese had surrounded the city, beaten in the gates and butchered every man, woman and child they found within.

A huge pit was dug outside the West Gate at the edge of the cemetery which already contained the victims of the bombings. The dead were heaped into it. Gladys stayed until late afternoon in the city, but, saddened and sickened by the tragedy, decided not to spend the night there but to return at once to Bei Chai Chuang.

There she organized a hospital. The sacking of Yangcheng had made this necessary. Many wounded had dragged themselves or been carried to refuge in the village.

That spring offensive of the Japanese down the ancient Shansi mule trails towards the Yellow River was obviously only a preliminary foray. In the early autumn their forces evacuated Tsehchow and pulled back as far as Luan. In the spring and early summer they moved into the mountains, following the old trade routes, overcoming any pockets of resistance with ruthlessness and barbarity.

After passing through Yangcheng they had pressed on as far as Chowtsun. Here they captured many people, including Hsi-Lien, the muleteer who had been Gladys's first convert. A rapid advance patrol had surprised him at home with his wife and three children. Grinning, the stocky Japanese soldiers prodded him outside.

"Here is a good strong muleteer," they said. "You will serve as an ammunition carrier and no harm will come to you and your family. You understand?"

But I cannot," faltered Hsi-Lien. "I am a Christian. I am a pacifist. If I carried your bullets, I would be helping in your war."

In that case," said a Japanese officer pleasantly, "we will show you how we treat Christians who refuse to help us."

They tied him to a post outside his own home, barricaded the door so that his wife and three children could not get out, and then set fire to the house. They jeered at him as the screams of the trapped woman and children drove Hsi Lien to the verge of madness. They left him tied there while the flames still burned.

Through the autumn and winter and the early spring of 1939, Gladys divided her time between Bei Chai Chuang, Yangcheng and the villages in the province where she had established her small Christian communities.

In that spring of 1939 the news that the Japanese were moving in through the mountains again sent a wind of panic blowing through Yangcheng. Reluctant to leave their homes and their livelihoods, the people had slowly returned, hoping that some miracle might prevent another Japanese advance. The orders of the Chinese Nationalist commander in the district destroyed all these illusions. Their dictum was harsh.

"A scorched earth policy!" they said. "Burn your crops. Leave your houses roofless. Let there be no shelter for the invaders anywhere! Take to the hills. Live in caves and mountains, and grow your crops in every fold or valley where you find good earth. Prey on the invader like locusts! Kill his men! Steal his supplies! Take the rifles from his dead and use them against the Japanese. Only in this way can we save China."

The mandarin was very troubled. He called Gladys to see him. "This policy of scorched earth is difficult. We have done almost everything that the soldiers desired, but there is this Pagoda of the Scorpion."

'What about it?" said Gladys. "Ugly old place.'

There is a legend attached to its history. Hundreds of years ago, so it is said, a giant scorpion roamed these mountains, destroying many people. While it was sleeping, the people brought great blocks of stone and built the pagoda around and over it, imprisoning it for ever. Now the townspeople are afraid that if they pull it down the scorpion will escape."

Gladys furrowed her brow. "D'you mean to say you believe that old wives' tale?'

He smiled. "No, I do not believe it; that is why I wish you and your Christians would accept the task of pulling it down.'

"With the greatest of pleasure," she said briskly, and with the slightly self righteous satisfaction of a good Christian allowed to destroy a work of idolatry. "I'll get the men in from Bei Chai Chuang, too. We'll start on that horrible heathen temple first thing tomorrow morning.'

When you have finished," said the mandarin, "I am giving a feast which I would like you to attend. I have something I wish you to hear."

Next morning, a hundred healthy Christians attacked the Pagoda of the Scorpion with a variety of implements. It did not take them very long to raze it to the ground.

The following day, the mandarin's feast was held and Gladys, to her surprise, found that although as usual she was the only woman present, on this occasion she was sitting next to the mandarin in the seat of honour. This had never happened before.

All the important personages of Yangcheng were present: the prison governor, two wealthy merchants, several officials, about a dozen in all. The meal was simple, unlike the sumptuous feasts she had enjoyed in earlier years, and which had lasted for hours.

At the end of it the mandarin stood up and made his speech. He recalled how Ai-weh-deh had first come to Yangcheng; how she had worked for them; what she had done for the poor and the sick and the imprisoned; of the

new faith called Christianity which she had brought with her, and which he had discussed with her on many occasions. Then he turned very gravely to Gladys and said: "I would like, Ai-weh-deh, to embrace your faith. I would like to become a Christian."

Around the table rose a murmur of surprise. Gladys was so astounded that she became temporarily speechless. She had made her most important convert in all her years in China.

The talk then turned to the approach of the Japanese, and how to evacuate the city.

The next day Gladys began to make arrangements for the departure of the mission dwellers for Bei Chai Chuang. This time she intended to be out well before the Japanese arrived.

She was in Bei Chai Chuang when the news reached her in the early spring that one of her Christian converts, in a village close to the town of Chin Shui, had been attacked by bandits.

With Timothy, a nine-year-old boy, one of her children, and Wan Yu, a seventeen-year-old girl who lived in a village not far from Chin Shui and wished to see her parents, Gladys set off to see how she could help him. They found the peasant in his room. He was very sick; the bandits had burned him horribly with red-hot irons. Gladys dressed his burns and made him as comfortable as she could.

They stayed there for a week. Then a messenger came running—literally running—from the small Christian mission which Gladys had set up at Chin Shui. The Japanese had entered Yangcheng again, and were expected to sweep up to Chin Shui any day now. There were two hundred refugees in the mission. Could she come and help at once?

She scrambled her few belongings together and set off with Timothy and Wan Yu. They spent the first night at Chensin, a small village. The next day they set off again. Chensin was no more than two miles behind them when they heard the noise of an aeroplane, and saw it beginning to zoom round above their heads. They threw themselves flat on the ground, heard the bombs whistle down and Gladys realized that it was Chin Shui, still a day's journey in front of them, that was under attack.

They arrived next morning in time to see the now almost familiar pattern being repeated. All the citizens were summoned to a large temple in the centre of the city and here the Mandarin of Chin Shui made his speech. The city had been bombed, therefore they could expect the enemy very soon. Everyone must leave the town not later than first light on the next day.

Gladys Aylward, the small woman, writing to her mother in England from the depths of China that year, said: "Do not wish me out of this or in any way seek to get me out, for I will not be got out while this trial is on."

At first light next morning, Gladys, Wan Yu and Timothy set off and walked through the East Gate carrying their bundles. Darkness still clung to the valleys, but the sky was lightening rapidly above the peaks ahead, and the cocks were brazenly warning the city that both day and the Japanese were advancing.

They had walked no more than three hundred yards when some instinctive sense, some mental telepathy, winked a series of warning signals along the corridors of Gladys's brain. There was no visual reason for the oppression of fear she suddenly experienced, but she believed implicitly in her intuitions. They said, "*Stop!*" Supposing the Japanese had patrols operating on each side of their advancing troops? Supposing they were trapped in the gorge by the patrols? It had almost happened to her outside Yangcheng.

She turned to Timothy and Wan Yu. "We're going back," she announced loudly. She turned on her heel and marched briskly back towards the city gates, tugging the children behind her.

"We can go and stay at my village," said Wan Yu eagerly, hurrying after her. "It lies in a valley out through the West Gate. My brother will look after us."

They hurried back through the East Gate. The streets were boiling with people. Men, women and children carrying a miscellaneous collection of household goods streamed through the streets, making for the West Gate.

As they scurried along with the crowd, Gladys heard a voice behind her calling: "Ai-weh-deh! Ai-weh-deh!" She looked round. It was the postmaster, a small, eager, fussy man whom she knew only slightly. He carried a bulky brown paper parcel.

"There are letters for you," he gabbled, thrusting the parcel at her. "They were sent on from Yangcheng. All the post office documents and stamps are in it, too. Will you look after it for me?"

At that moment, from the gate by which they had just re-entered, came the noise of shots and screams of terror. The Japanese had arrived. If her intuition had not warned her, her small party would have walked right into them.

There was immediate panic, whereas everyone had been walking, now they were running. Larger baskets and bundles were jettisoned in a wild scramble for the West Gate. Men, women and children popped from houses and alleyways and joined the confusion.

The postmaster—evil responsibility abandoned—dropped the parcel at Gladys's feet and ran for his life. Instinctively she stooped to pick it up. It was heavy, too big to carry under her arm, she struggled along, carrying it in both arms on top of her bedding, determined not to abandon the precious letters from home. Timothy and Wan Yu scurried along beside her carrying bundles of Bibles from the mission, for they were too precious to lose.

Outside the West Gate the road ran parallel to the swift-flowing Chin River. There was a ford three hundred yards from the city gate. Wan Yu's village lay across the river and far up on the other side. Most of the townspeople were making for the ford. Amid a swarm of them, Gladys, Wan Yu and Timothy waded the river.

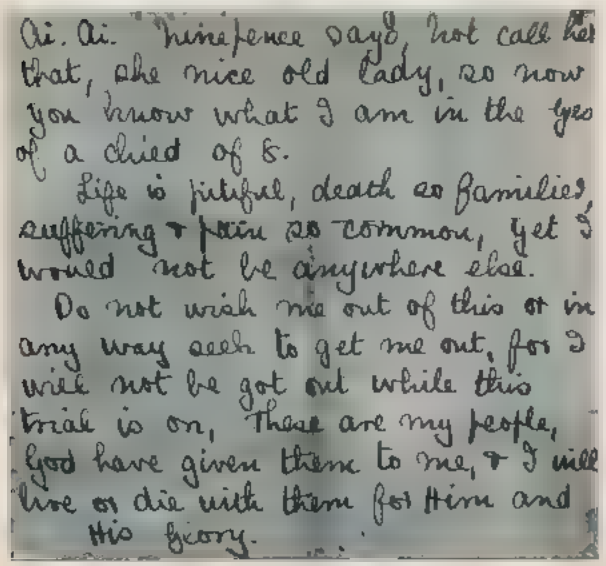
It was chest-deep to Gladys, she abandoned her bedding and balanced the post office parcel on her head with one hand, clutching Timothy with the other. In mid-stream she thought suddenly how ridiculous she must look; fleeing from the Japanese with a brown paper parcel containing all the paraphernalia of the Chin Shui post office balanced on her head. But she did not stop to laugh.

All that day they climbed, barely pausing to rest. Wan Yu's village lay almost at the top of the mountain with only one other above it.

In Wan Yu's house lived her old mother, her brother and his wife, but soon they were joined by many others fleeing from the Japanese. There were poor creatures to whom the house of Wan Yu's brother became a final haven. They could go no farther. They sheltered two blind old men, several grandfathers, pregnant women and others with small babies, and half a dozen children. It was quite impossible to think of

Continued on page 28

Gladys with Wan Yu (left) and two other girls in her care. During one Japanese advance, Gladys hid in Wan Yu's village


Ai. Ai. Innocence says, not call her that, she nice old lady, so now you know what I am in the eyes of a child of 6.

Life is pitiful, death so families, suffering & pain so common, yet I would not be anywhere else.

Do not wish me out of this or in any way seek to get me out, for I will not be got out while this trial is on. These are my people, God have given them to me, & I will live or die with them for Him and His glory.

"These are my people . . . and I will live or die with them" – part of a letter which Gladys wrote to her parents in London

A Bachelor's Story

by *FRANK O'CONNOR*

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

How could Archie ever trust a woman again . . . ? It was a terrible thing to lose one's heart to a girl — and then find she could be too perfect

My friend Archie Boland was a civil servant, a big man with a broad red face and hot blue eyes, and a crust of worldliness and bad temper overlying a nature that had a lot of sweetness and fun in it. We used to go home from work together through the streets of Dublin. He was older than I, but we both liked to drop in at a certain pub on the canal bank where they kept good draught.

Archie was a bachelor. Whenever we met women he was very polite, and even effusive, in an old fashioned way, but afterwards he would look very sour and tell me things about their home life.

"I know," he said one evening, carefully putting down the two pints of stout and lowering himself on to the seat in the corner. "You think 'tis only sour grapes."

"I didn't think anything," I said.

"Well, maybe there's something of the kind in it," he acknowledged. "But it isn't only that. You see, when I was your age I had an experience that upset me a lot. It upset me so much that I didn't feel I could ever go through the same thing again. Maybe I was too idealistic."

And there, in the far corner of that pub on the canal bank, he told me the story of his experience, the experience that had turned him against all women, and I said the wrong thing and turned him against me as well. Ah, well, I was younger then.

You see, Archie had been a great cyclist. He had cycled round Ireland twice and made innumerable long trips to see various historic spots. He was that sort of man. He was no scholar, but he liked to know what he was talking about, and liked to show other people that they didn't.

One evening he arrived in a remote Connemara village where three or four women teachers were staying, studying Irish, and after supper he got to chatting with them, and they went walking. One was a young woman called Madge Hale, a slight girl with blue-grey eyes, a clear-skinned face, and a rather breathless manner. Archie noticed at once that she was very intelligent and that, whenever he said something that interested her, her whole face lit up like a child's.

The teachers were going on a trip to the Aran Islands next day, and Archie decided to join them. They visited the tiny oratories, and as none of the teachers knew much about them Archie, in his well-informed way, described the origin of the island monasteries and the life of the hermit monks.

Madge was fascinated and kept asking questions about what the churches had originally looked like, and when Archie, flattered, suggested that she should accompany him on a bicycle trip the following day, she agreed at once, enthusiastically. The other women laughed, and Madge laughed, too, though it was clear that she didn't really know why they were laughing.

Now this was the one sure way to Archie's heart. He disliked women because they were always going to parties or the pictures, painting their faces and taking aspirin in cartloads. There was too much nonsense altogether about them for his taste, but at last he had met a girl who seemed absolutely devoid of nonsense and was serious through and through.

After their trip next day, he suggested that she cycle back to Dublin with him. This time she hesitated, but it was only for a few moments while she considered the practical implications of it, and then her face lit up in the same eager way and she said. "If you think I won't be in your way, Archie."

Now it turned out she was in Archie's way, for he was a man of old-fashioned ideas, who had never in his life allowed a woman he was accompanying to pay for a cup of tea for herself, and as to what he endured going to a country hotel with a pretty girl at the end of the day, nobody could describe it. When he went to the reception desk, he felt an almost overwhelming compulsion to tell everybody that any ideas they might have were entirely caused by their own bad minds.

Any other girl would have been wondering what her parents and friends would say if they knew, but the idea of scandal never seemed to enter Madge's head. And it wasn't, as Archie shrewdly guessed, that she was either fast or flighty. It just never occurred to her that anything she and Archie might do involved any culpability.

That settled Archie's business. He realized that she was the one woman in the world for him. They cycled south through Clare, and stood on the cliffs overlooking the Atlantic; the weather held good, and they pushed up through the flat country to Cashel, and drank lemonade in country pubs, and finally went over the hills to Kilkenny, where they spent their last evening wandering about in the dusk under the ruins of medieval abbeys and houses; and never once did Archie as much as hold her hand or speak to her of love.

He scowled as he told me this, as though he thought I might make fun of him, but I had no inclination to do so, for I knew that enchantment of the senses that people of chaste and lonely character feel in one another's company. It is infinitely more vivid in the memory than all the passionate embraces of lovers.

When they separated outside her lodgings in Rathmines late one summer evening, Archie felt he was at last free to speak. He held her hand when she said goodbye.

"I think we had quite good fun, don't you?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, Archie!" she cried laughing. "It was wonderful. It was the happiest time I ever spent."

He was so encouraged by this that he deliberately held on to her hand. "That's the way I feel too," he said beginning to blush. "I didn't like to say it before, because I thought it might

By now, Archie knew about Madge's little game; it was all guile and treachery. He stepped from the shadows to confront her

"Oh, it was the happiest time I ever spent," said Madge. Archie was so encouraged that he held on to her hand. "That's the way I feel too," he said.

embarrass you. I never met a woman like you before, and if you wanted to marry me, I'd be honoured."

He thought from the way her face suddenly grew shadowed that he had embarrassed her even now.

"Are you sure, Archie?" she asked nervously. "Because you don't know me very long."

That's a thing that soon rights itself," Archie said oracularly.

"And besides, it would be a long while," she added. "My people aren't very well off and I have to help them."

"And I'm way down the card on the civil service," Archie replied good-humouredly, "so it may be quite a while before I can do what I'd like to do, as well. I know my own character pretty well," he added proudly, "and I know there's nothing that would mean more to me. And I'm not a man to change his mind."

She still seemed to hesitate. For a moment he even had the impression that she was on the point of refusing him, but then her face cleared in the old way and she laughed nervously.

"Very well, Archie," she said, "If you really want me."

"I want you, Madge," he replied gravely, and then waved his hat and pushed his bicycle away while she stood and waved back.

I admired that gesture even as he described it. It was so like Archie and I could see that such an engagement would haunt him as no passionate love-making and betrothal ever would. It was magnificent, but at the same time it was impractical.

However, he was too innocent to know that. To him the business of walking out with a girl was miracle enough in itself. Madge was a girl of very sweet disposition, so that they hardly ever had a quarrel, and even at the best of times this must have been an event in Archie's life for he had an irascible, quarrelsome streak. It was true that there were certain evenings and weekends that she kept to herself, to visit an aunt in Multown, or some of her old friends, but they did not worry Archie, who felt that this was something any conscientious girl should do.

Oh, of course, it was too perfect. Of course, an older hand would have waited to see what price he was expected to pay for all those perfections. But Archie was an idealist and felt that Nature was in business entirely for his benefit.

MY BROTHER George

ONE day our Aunt Annie came to tea. George had been out in the fields near our home in Brentwood, Essex, and the tea table was laid by the time he returned. He was told to go and wash his hands, but instead of obeying he put his hand in his pocket and brought out a brown, wriggling mouse.

Casually, he put it on the floor. Aunt Annie shrieked with fear and jumped up on to the table, just as George—and secretly I—had hoped she would.

George was always involved in some way with animals. I remember that on one occasion he forced his way through two hundred yards of reed growing over a dangerous bog to try to reach a swan's nest. Just as he got near, the male swan saw him and came for him, its sharp beak snapping. George ran for it and tumbled deep in the mud, finally reaching home looking a very sorry figure indeed.

By next day he was there again, and this time managed to bring home a swan's egg from which he proudly made an enormous omelet which easily fed the six of us.

When George was seven he found a wasp's nest. He took a sharp stick and poked into the nest. Of course, hundreds of angry wasps aimed themselves at him and his face was badly stung all over.

When my three brothers were old enough they all became motor-bike mad. George, who was the youngest, spent hours taking the bikes to pieces, and everyone was very relieved when he became old enough to have one of his own. From that day on, our house was like the pits on a race track and the boys were out early in the morning speeding round the "circuit" the few local lanes around the house—always trying to knock a few seconds off the time they took to get round.

George used to wear climbing irons which he had made himself and could climb the tallest trees with them. This was useful, as he was always having to retrieve his pigeons, which seemed reluctant to come home.

He loved fishing. In Devon he had plenty of opportunity and went out with the fishermen nearly every morning. He would return home at night smelling to high heaven of fish. I have a vivid picture of George being bundled straight into the bath just as a visitor came to the door. He was told to stay there until the visitor had gone, but even after an hour of scrubbing the fishy smell remained.

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 24

THEN one day Nature gave him a jab. In town he happened to run into one of the group of teachers he had met in Connemara during the summer, and he politely invited her to a cup of tea.

"I hear you're seeing a lot of Madge," said the teacher gaily, as if this were a guilty secret between the pair of them.

"Oh yes," said Archie without a trace of guilt. "And with God's help I expect to be doing it for the rest of my life."

So I heard. I'm delighted for Madge. But I wonder what happened to that other fellow she was engaged to?"

"Why?" asked Archie, who knew well that she was pecking at him, and kept a straight face even though he felt sick. "Was she engaged to another fellow?"

"Ah surely she must have told you that!" the teacher cried with mock consternation. "I hope I'm not saying anything wrong. I thought she was engaged to him. He was a teacher too—somewhere on the South Side. What was his name?"

"I'll ask her and let you know," Archie replied blandly. He was giving nothing away till he had more time to think of it.

All the same, he was in an ugly temper. He, of course had felt compelled to confess to Madge every sin of his past life, and he naturally assumed when Madge did not do the same that it could only be because she had nothing to confess. Now he saw that this was a grave mistake. Because everyone has something to confess—particularly a woman.

Though Archie didn't recognize it, his pride was hurt. He regarded Madge's silence as equivalent to an insult, and in the matter of insults he felt it was his duty to take a strong line.

So, instead of having it out with her, he proceeded to make her life a misery. He continued to walk out with her as though nothing had happened and again and again he brought the conversation gently round to various domestic disasters that had or hadn't occurred in his experience, all of them caused by deceit.

This was intended to scare the wits out of Madge—as it probably did. Then he called on a friend of his in the Department of Education and brought him out for a drink.

"Is it the Hale girl?" his friend said. "Isn't she engaged to that assistant in St. Joseph's? Wheeler? A chap with a lame leg. I think I heard that. Why? You're not keen on her yourself by any chance?"

"Ah, you know me," Archie replied with a fat smile.

"You'd better hurry," said his friend. "Now you mention it, they were only supposed to be waiting till he got a headship somewhere. He's a nice lad, I think."

So I'm told," said Archie, and again he went away with a smile on his lips and murder in his heart.

So Archie still continued to see Madge, though now his method of tormenting her was to press her about those odd evenings she was supposed to spend with her aunt or some old friends. He realized that some of those evenings were probably really filled as she described them, since at times she showed no embarrassment at his probing and gibing. At other times his questions distressed her.

"I could meet you tomorrow when you come out, you know," he said one night in a benign tone that almost glowed.

"But I don't know when I will get out, Archie," she replied, blushing and stammering.

"Ah, well, even if you didn't get out until half past ten, it would still give us time for a little walk. It's all very well doing your duty by your old friends, but you mustn't let yourself get too conscientious."

"I really couldn't promise anything, Archie," she said, almost angrily, and Archie smiled to himself.

The next night Archie was waiting at the corner of a side-street, in shadow watching her house.

He had been there only about ten minutes when she came out and tripped down the steps. When she emerged from the garden, she turned right and went up the hill, and Archie followed, guided more by the distinctive clack of her heels than by the occasional glimpses he caught of her under a street lamp.

She reached the bus stop at the top of the road, and a man came up and spoke to her. He was a youngish man, hatless and thin, with a lame leg. Then he took her arm and they went off together in the direction of the river. As they did, Archie heard her happy, eager, foolish laugh and it sounded as though she were laughing at him.

He was beside himself with misery. He had got what he was seeking for—full confirmation of her guilt—and now he had no idea what to do with it. To follow them and have it out with them on the river bank was one possibility, but he realized that Wheeler probably knew as little of him as he had known of Wheeler, and that there would be no satisfaction in confronting him. No, it was that abominable woman he would have to have it out with.

He went back to his post, turned into a public house at the corner, and sat swallowing whisky in silence until another customer touched on one of his political taboos. Then he sprang to his feet and thundered for a full five minutes against people with slave minds, and stalked out feeling that his anger had been entirely disinterested.

This time he had to wait for over an hour in the damp and cold before he heard her footsteps. The young man had apparently left her at the spot where they had met. It was all guile and treachery. He crossed the road and stood under a tree beside her gate so well concealed that she entirely failed to see him until he stepped out to meet her. Then she started back.

"Who's that?" she asked in a startled whisper, and then, after a look, added with what sounded like joy and was probably only relief. "Oh Archie! It's you." Then, as he said nothing, her tone changed again and he could detect the consternation as she asked: "What are you doing here, Archie?"

"Waiting," replied Archie hollowly.

"Waiting? But for what, Archie?"

"You should know that."

"Oh, Archie, don't talk to me like that."

"And what way do you expect me to talk to you? I suppose you're going to tell me now you were at your aunt's."

"No, Archie," she replied meekly. "I wasn't. I was out with a friend."

"Oh, is that all he was? A friend?"

"No, Archie. He's not exactly a friend either."

"Not exactly," Archie repeated with grim satisfaction. "A friend you happened to be engaged to at the time you met me."

That's true, Archie," she admitted. "I can't deny that. But you must let me explain."

"The time for explanations is past," thundered Archie. "The time for explanations was three months ago. For three months and more, your whole life has been a living lie."

This was a phrase Archie had thought up, all on his own, drinking whisky in the pub. It was intended to draw blood, and it did.

"I wish you wouldn't say that, Archie," Madge said, in distress. "I know I wasn't telling the whole truth, but I wasn't trying to tell you lies."

"You weren't trying," he said. "You didn't need to try. What you should try some time is to tell the truth."

"But I *am* telling the truth," she said indignantly. "I'm not a liar. I couldn't *help* getting engaged to Pat. He asked me, and I couldn't refuse him."

"You couldn't refuse him."

"No, I couldn't. I told you you should let me explain. It's a long story. I refused a boy once, at home, and he—he died."

"He died?"

He committed suicide. It was an awful thing to happen, but it wasn't my fault. I was young and I didn't know he was so delicate in the head. I thought it was all a game and I just made fun of him. How could I know the way a young fellow would feel about a thing like that?"

Hah!" Archie said uncertainly, feeling that she had thought too quickly for him and that all his good anger would be wasted in some foolish discussion. "And I suppose you felt you couldn't refuse me, either?"

Well as a matter of fact, Archie she said apologetically, "that was the way I did feel. I was hoping you wouldn't ask me, because I was sort of engaged already, and it's not the sort of situation you'd like to be in yourself: being engaged to two girls at the one time."

You thought *I'd* commit suicide.

"I didn't know Archie. It wasn't until afterwards that I began to like you real well."

"You didn't know," he said, choking with indignation at the suggestion that he was a man of such weak and commonplace stuff. "The vanity and madness of it? Good God! And you

couldn't tell me all this time about the fellow you say committed suicide?"

"But how could I, Archie? That's not the sort of thing a girl likes to boast of"

"No, and so you'll go through life tricking and deceiving every man that comes your way—out of pure kindness of heart. That be damned for a yarn!"

"It's not a yarn, Archie," she cried hotly. "It's true, and it only happened with Pat and you, and one other boy at home, but the last I heard of him, he was walking out with another girl and I'm hoping he's well over it by now."

The picture of a third man engaged to his own fiancée was really too much for Archie. He knew that he could never argue against this little liar.

Madge," he said, "I do not like to insult any woman to her face, but I do not believe you. I can't believe anything you say. You have behaved to me in a deceitful and dishonourable manner, and I can't trust you any longer."

Then he turned on his heel and walked heavily away, and remembered how at this very spot, a few months before, he had turned away with his heart full of joy, and now he realized that everything people said about women was true, true to the last bitter gibe, and that he would never again trust another of them. . . .

"It was the end of my attempts at getting married," he finished grimly. "Of course, she wrote to me and gave me the names of two witnesses that I could refer to, who would corroborate what she had told me about the boy who committed suicide, but I told her I was no longer interested."

"Archie," I said incredulously, "you don't mean to say that you really dropped her?"

"Dropped her?" he repeated, beginning to scowl. "I never spoke to the girl again. I used to raise my hat to her when I met her in the street, but that was all. Damn it, man, I have some pride."

"But Archie," I said despairingly, "suppose she was telling the truth?"

"And suppose she was?" he asked in a murderous tone.

Then I began to laugh. I couldn't help it, though I saw it was making him furious. For I had found myself falling in love with the girl as he described her and wishing she had crossed my path instead of his.

"But damn it, Archie," I said, "you said yourself she was a serious girl. All you're telling me now is that she was sweet as well. She must have had a hell of a time, being engaged to two men in the same town and trying to keep them both happy till one of them tired of her and left her free to marry you."

"Or free for a third fellow to come along and put her in the same position again," Archie said savagely.

I suppose that's true," I said. It hadn't occurred to me, and it stopped me dead for a moment. But there is no stopping a man in love, and I was still in love with Madge and trying to find reasons for myself.

"But after all," I said, "isn't that why you marry women like that? Can you imagine marrying them if that danger wasn't there? It's not easy to defend it rationally, but that's how it is, Archie. I think you made a fool of yourself."

"It's not possible to defend it rationally or any other way," Archie said with finality. "A woman like that is a woman without character. You might as well stick your head in a gas oven and have done with it as marry a girl like that."

And from that evening forth Archie dropped me. He even told his friends that I was a loose-living type and would be bound to end up bad.

Maybe he was right, maybe I shall end up bad yet. But maybe, on the other hand, I was only saying to him the things he had been saying to himself for years in the bad hours coming on to morning, and maybe when he told me about Madge he merely wanted me to reassure and soothe him, not to hear his own sentence pronounced from another man's lips.

THE END

Grandfather and the Golden West

Continued from page 7

there was a juke-box. A bus passenger, a dapper man in a dark suit, was in the act of inserting a coin. Mr Cumber held his breath. Next moment, his nerves quivered. Incredibly it was that old last year's number again.

He couldn't get over it. Back in the bus, he went on hearing the tune exhaustingly in his tired old head. When the breakfast halt came, he would have preferred to stay in the bus, safe from juke-boxes, but he was afraid that, if he did so, Letty might start worrying.

Mercifully, as it turned out, nobody started the juke-box at this halt.

"I'm glad to see," Letty remarked as they breakfasted, "that the lame man's got out for something to eat this time."

All day the bus travelled on. The Far West was beginning to seem farther west to Mr Cumber than he had thought feasible. At the halts some passengers left the bus, others boarded it. The drivers changed, each bringing and taking his nameplate. At every halt there was a juke-box. Sometimes a passenger would start it, sometimes not. But, to his relief, Mr Cumber didn't hear that old last year's number again. It became a fading jingle in his mind.

So when, at St Louis, Letty wanted them to break their journey in order that her grandfather could go to bed properly and not just in a seat that tilted back, Mr Cumber would have none of it.

"Nonsense, my dear," he said. He had caught a glimpse of old showboats moored along the river bank and was feeling much revived by the sight. "Once over the river we shall be practically in the West."

But at the midnight coffee halt he heard the tune again.

It made his skin creep. The swarthy man in the bright blue suit was just turning away from the juke-box. That fellow again! Mr. Cumber wondered what conceivable fascination the tune could have for him.

He looked despairingly at Letty and Bob. Like the other passengers, they were talking drowsily as they sipped their coffee. No one seemed perturbed. It occurred to Mr Cumber that a background of jangle must be so much a part of younger people's lives nowadays that they didn't even hear it. He was too old, that was his trouble. You had to grow up with things like juke-boxes.

"I'm sure there's something odd about that man in black, the lame man," Letty said. "He never gets off the bus at night, but I don't think he sleeps a wink. He seems to do his sleeping and his eating in the daytime. Have you noticed, Bob?"

Her voice sounded far off to Mr Cumber because, unobtrusively, he had his hands to his ears. He was trying to shut out the sound of the juke-box but he couldn't do it. When he returned to his seat in the bus, that old last year's number had taken maddening possession of his mind again. Muttering darkly to himself, he marked in the driving-mirror the three addicts of that tune.

The swarthy man in the blue suit sat on the left side of the bus. The bulky man with the cropped head and pink-rimmed eyes, slummocked in his seat a bit farther back, on the right. The dapper man in the dark suit sat still farther back on the left.

Three torturers, thought Mr Cumber grimly.

He had them marked. At each halt next day he hoped to see one or other or all of them leave the bus for good, but none of them did. On the other hand, none of them went near the juke-boxes, ever-present at every halt. Sometimes other passengers set a tune going, but it was a different tune, and that wasn't so bad, somehow.

On and on went the bus. For the first time in his life Mr. Cumber began really to appreciate why the Far West was so called. Four nights on a bus! It seemed hardly possible. Yet it wouldn't have exhausted him so much if it hadn't been that at each night coffee halt again he heard that same number from the juke-box. And the same men responsible for it. And in the same order. First, the swarthy man in the blue suit; then, the bulky man with the pink-rimmed eyes.

Back in the bus, Mr Cumber tried to think it all out. He was haunted by a feeling that surely it was a very strange coincidence that three men who obviously were strangers to each other, who never so much as glanced at each other, should be, in turn, first to the juke-box at each night time halt, and should start off invariably that old last year's number.

He tried to concentrate on the matter, but the tune wouldn't let him. It went running on and on in his head, maddeningly, and got all mixed up with the steady boom of the bus's engine, the singing of the tyres, and the incredible realization that he was in the West.

Never had a night seemed to Mr Cumber so endless, but at last there began to creep over the sky a premonitory pallor. Subtly the light strengthened and became tinged with gold. And Mr Cumber saw the West.

The bus was alone, a creeping and tiny thing lost in a plain of silvery grass ringed round by a rim of hills remote on the horizon. Ahead, solitary in the midst of the plain, stood two buildings. One was in the *pueblo* style, long and low, the colour of sand, with beams jutting out through its walls. The other——

Mr. Cumber felt hastily for his eye-glasses.

The bus was slowing to a halt. The building was two-storeyed, flimsily built of timber. It had half-length swing-doors which opened from a covered veranda with warped and sagging floorboards laden with barrels and sacks. Over the doors was the date 1850. It was a saloon of the kind he had written about a thousand times.

He could hardly wait to get out of the bus. He was the first to step down. He looked up at the building, half expecting to hear from it a roar of voices, a stamp of feet, a squeak of fiddles, a clatter of faro chips, half expecting to see the doors burst open before a lurching figure. But the building was silent, and what he actually saw was the figure, crouched on the sloping roof of the veranda, of a man in chaps, spurs and ten-gallon hat with a neckerchief masking his face and a cocked six-shooter in either hand peering sidelong into an upper window.

Mr Cumber stood rigid.

"Don't be taken in, sir," a voice chuckled behind him. It was Bob Eliot. "That figure's just a dummy. The saloon's only a replica. The whole set-up's just to give the tourist trade a kick."

He didn't mean to be cruel. It was just that he didn't understand.

"Say, Letty," he went on, "I bet that's my brother Jim's motor-cycle."

Mr Cumber dragged his gaze away from the figure on the roof. A dummy! For the tourist trade. He had a queer insubstantial feeling, rather as though he had become invisible, had become a ghost. He looked about him wonderingly.

The sun was showing above the rim of the far hills. Its rays gleamed on a number of cars parked on the pull-in before the *pueblo* inn. Among them a powerful, twin-cylindered motor-cycle, with brass-studded saddle and panniers, was propped aslant on its sup port-arm. Over the numberplate was a sign that read SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT.

Mr. Cumber tried to picture the Sheriff Hunter of his stories on a motor-cycle. He couldn't do it.

"My home's not far ahead now, Letty," Bob said. "In the Tijeras Canyon. I'm going to enjoy showing it to you. I haven't seen my brother Jim for a year. I bet he's ridden out here to meet the bus and say howdy. Works for the Sheriff's Department, Jim does. Let's go on in and see if he's fallen asleep over his coffee."

"He's not used to liquor, you know. He just takes an occasional drink to be sociable"

MR CUMBER was staring at a figure leaning against one of the cars, a figure in shirt and trousers of fringed buckskin, an Indian with a rattlesnake band binding his lank black hair, and a bundle of ornamental blankets over his shoulder. The Indian stared back at Mr. Cumber's English tailored suit.

"Just a Navajo buck, sir, peddling blankets," said Bob. "The inn here's a licensed Indian Trading Post."

"Come, Grandfather," said Letty, taking his arm.

"An Indian Trading Post," Mr Cumber muttered.

Each side of the door was a totem pole. This, Mr Cumber felt, was just as it should be. But inside the one great room, into which sunshine now streamed through low, wide, chintz-curtained windows, pretty waitresses flitted about, setting breakfast-tables. Waitresses! In an Indian Trading Post!

Then Mr Cumber saw the juke-box. The swarthy man in the bright blue

GIFTS AND GIVING—I

Presents endear Absents

Charles Lamb

tropical suit now much creased and rumpled, was inserting a coin in the instrument.

Mr Cumber's nerves cringed. His teeth gritted, his hands clenched, in anticipation of that tune, that old last year's number.

A quite different tune jangled from the juke-box.

Mr Cumber could hardly believe his ears. He stared. Then he became aware that Bob was introducing to him another young man, a young man as long and slim as Bob himself but wearing a plaid shirt, bleached blue jeans tucked into high-heeled boots, a white hat tilted back on his head, and a belt that sagged with the weight of filled cartridge-loops and heavy, brass-studded holster.

"My brother Jim, sir," said Bob, "of the Sheriff's Department. Here, sir—let's sit at this table here."

They sat down, the four of them, and Letty and the two young men talked happily together. But Mr Cumber didn't talk. His impressions were too confused, and he couldn't blot out—as everybody else so obviously and so easily did—the jangle of the juke-box, which, since it had been started by one of the three torturers was playing, as it seemed to Mr Cumber in some wild, irrational way *the wrong tune*.

What are you looking for out there, sir?" said Bob Eliot. "Indian smokes?"

Mr Cumber looked at him vaguely.

Bob grinned. "You were gazing out of the window there," he said, "at those hills way off, as though you were looking for something. You won't see any smokes in the hills these days, sir—no Apache or Arapahoe signals I'm afraid."

"Signals," said Mr Cumber, and his heart gave a sudden hard thump in his chest, and he looked at the jangling juke-box. "Signals?" he said.

He looked round at the tables where the bus passengers were breakfasting. He noted the swarthy man in the blue suit, the crop-headed man with pink-rimmed eyes; the dapper man in the dark suit. He looked for a fourth man, but he didn't see him. And Mr Cumber with a dryness in his throat looked at the silver badge over the pocket of Jim Eliot's blue shirt, and he said in a low voice, "Sheriff will you kindly step outside with me for a moment?"

"Not quite Sheriff, sir," said Jim Eliot. "Just a deputy. But. . . He rose.

Grandfather!" said Letty. "What is it?"

Stay here, child," said the old man grimly. "You, too, Bob Sheriff . . ."

He walked out, and, though he was a tall old man—tall and frail—Jim Eliot, following, was still taller.

Mr Cumber stopped outside the door. He looked at the great bus parked among the shining cars, and the one motor-cycle, on the dust white sun glistening pull-in.

Mr Cumber raised his eyeglasses. He saw that there was only one person in the bus. It was the lame man in black. Through the bus window, Mr Cumber could see him sitting in the rear seat, his hat over his eyes, his chin sunk on his chest.

Mr Cumber cleared his throat carefully. "Sheriff," he said, "that man does his eating during the daylight hours. Just ask him why he's having no breakfast, there's a good fellow."

Jim Eliot hesitated for a moment, looking at Mr Cumber oddly. Then he thumbed his white hat farther back on his head and swung up into the bus.

Mr Cumber walked forward a few paces across the pull-in, then turned sharply, his eyeglasses raised, and looked at the chintz-curtained windows of the *pueblo* inn. He was just in time to see a blue-suited figure draw back sharply from one of the windows.

Jim Eliot stepped down from the bus. "That man, sir," he said, "has got a knife in his chest."

Mr Cumber nodded slowly. "That was why the tune changed," he said. He saw it so clearly, now. "Sheriff," he said, "that man in black felt himself unsafe from the very start of our journey. He insisted on a double seat. No one beside him. He slept and ate during the day. He feared the night. He kept awake at night. He feared the occasional passenger who would walk to the back of the bus—to the toilet. He feared an enemy. Had one man only made that trip to the back of the bus repeatedly then the man in black would have guessed who his enemy was. I doubt if he realized that he had a *team* against him."

"A team, sir?" Jim Eliot said.

"Three of them," said Mr. Cumber, "acting in relay, taking it in turns at each stage of the night journey, to walk to the back—hoping to catch the man in black asleep, so that a hand could be clapped over his mouth and a knife driven into his heart without a sound or struggle to attract attention."

"But," said Jim, "the tune——"

They had to seem to be unacquainted with each other," said Mr Cumber, "by the slightest word or glance. They communicated by means of these—these juke-boxes at every halt. As each in turn failed to find the quarry asleep, off guard, at the next halt he started a certain old last year's number on the juke-box—as a signal that the job still remained to be done and for the next man in the relay to take over. A murder relay race, Sheriff, all across this vast land of yours. When the tune was changed, what else could it mean but that the job was done?"

"And that they were all three to leave the bus here," Jim Eliot said, "hire a car from the inn and beat it. The bus'd go on to Albuquerque, probably, before anything wrong with that man in black was discovered. And those boys would have vanished into thin air by then."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr Cumber. "Undoubtedly, also, the job was done between the last coffee halt and this breakfast halt. So the one who did it was the one who started the juke-box here—a swarthy man in a suit of rather bright blue."

"Mr. Cumber, sir," Jim Eliot said evenly, "would that be the man—just coming out the door of the inn there, now?"

"Sheriff," said Mr Cumber, no less evenly, though his hand quivered a little as he held up his eyeglasses to his faded old grey eyes, "that's the man. And he knows that the fat's in the fire, Sheriff. Because, do you see, the other two are with him now."

The three men stood before the inn door, with its totem poles. They stood quite still: the swarthy man in the bright blue tropical suit, the bulky man in white with his cropped head and pink-rimmed eyes, the dapper man in the dark suit.

They looked steadily across the space of sun-glittering dust at Mr. Cumber and Jim Eliot. The old Englishman saw every minute detail with a preternatural clarity and he was aware of the vast plain, silvery all about the two lonely buildings, and of the rim of low, blue hills on the horizon, and he had a feeling that all this West he had come so far to see would be the last thing he ever would see.

"Okay, Mr Cumber, sir," said Jim Eliot. He was holding his right hand well away from the heavy holster at his hip. He called to the three men quite quietly. "Just a minute there, fellows."

The man in the dark suit fired from his pocket.

It seemed to Mr. Cumber that Jim Eliot's revolver roared in the same instant. And roared again. The man in the dark suit seemed to be folding up, quite slowly, sagging down in the sunshine. The swarthy man was locked with Jim. They were falling together, striking at each other.

The big, bulky, rumpled man with the pink-rimmed eyes was running for the motor-cycle propped askant on its support-arm. His intention was obvious to Mr Cumber. He forced his shaky old pins to move. He planted himself full in the bulky man's way—and he felt as if he had been hit by an elephant.

His frail old form was hurled backwards against the motor-cycle. He and it went down together with an almighty crash in the dust, with the bulky man on top of them. The back of Mr Cumber's head hit the ground with an impact that detonated a blinding white flash before his eyes.

Then it was dark.

Then there was a kind of sun-tinted mist floating before his eyes, and Letty's anxious, pretty face was hovering over him.

"Lie still, Grandfather," she said.

It seemed he was still alive. Mr Cumber was astonished. He looked about him. He was lying on a couch. All round him were counters stacked with bright-coloured, beaded moccasins, Mexican sombreros, showcases filled with Mescalero pottery, Navajo jewellery of beaten silver set with turquoise. Peering in at him impassively through a chintz-curtained window was an Indian with lank black hair, a rattlesnake-skin band round his head.

It all came back then, to Mr Cumber.

"I'm in the Far West," he said.

Marvelling, he put aside the hand with which Letty was bathing his forehead. He struggled to a sitting position, looking up at Bob and Jim Eliot, who stood beside the couch.

"Did you get them, Sheriff?" said Mr Cumber.

"Not Sheriff Mr Cumber, sir," said Jim. "Just a deputy. Sheriff's on his way out now. We've got those three men under lock and key here—one of 'em shot up a mite. The lame man, sir—the man in black—he's not dead. Doctor's with him, now. Seems that knife was an inch or two off the mark. The man's conscious."

Why were they after him, Sheriff?" Mr Cumber asked.

"Well, now," Jim drawled, "it seems to be one of these science affairs, Mr Cumber, sir. The man's a physicist. He tells me he's got a friend working on a project going on out here in New Mexico. It's kind of to celebrate the International Geophysical Year.

"It's an artificial satellite they aim to fire into orbit, but they haven't touched her off yet, and this physicist fellow reckoned they might be having a bit of trouble, so he thought he'd come along out here.

But back there, just before he started off, he had a hunch he was being tailed, and that somebody else was interested in that briefcase of his with all those secrets. Turns out he wasn't far wrong, and they'd have got away with it, too, if it hadn't been for you, Mr Cumber, sir."

Mr Cumber nodded slowly. He glanced towards the juke-box. It was mercifully silent.

Mr Cumber," said Bob, who had a hand on Letty's shoulder, "isn't interested in science, Jim. He's come here looking for the old West."

Well he's tangled with the new," said Jim dryly, "that's for sure."

Mr Cumber looked far across the great plain to the rim of rounded purple hills. He thought of the artificial satellite over there somewhere pointing enigmatically to the blue sky and outer space. Not interested in science? He wasn't so sure.

He smiled at Letty. "Starlet," he said, "what a long, long way you've brought your old grandfather! And what a lot there is to know!"

He patted her young cheek affectionately with an aged hand.

One's never too old to learn," said Mr Cumber.

THE END

"Oh dear, here comes Mrs. Jinks. She's certain to want to look at the baby"

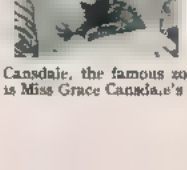
GIFTS AND GIVING—2

We do not quite forgive a giver.

R. W. Emerson

MY BROTHER GEORGE

See page 22



George Cansdale, the famous zoological expert, is Miss Grace Cansdale's brother

Sapphires on Wednesday

Continued from page 13

the window and stared out over the airfield.

"You say Miro has an apartment and an office in Milan?" he asked abruptly.

"Yes."

"Will there be anybody there while he's away?"

"Well, there will be in the office. Miro has a secretary, a horrible man called Varia. There shouldn't be any one at the apartment."

Where would Miro keep confidential papers—at the apartment, or the office, or would they be out of town, at his villa?"

Well," Audie spoke slowly, dragging out the words. "I don't know. Probably in Milan, though, if they were business papers. What kind of papers do you mean?"

I don't know. But you see how it is. I'm going on the idea that Miro must be in some kind of desperate jam. He *must* be, and if it's all that big there must be signs of it. Could it be politics? Was Miro a collaborator?"

"Yes. How did you know?"

"I smelled it."

"But he's in the clear about that. It's all over and done with. I guess he bribed his way out of it."

"Yes," Mark spoke rapidly. His brain was working on the problem now. "But you know how these things are. I mean, he might have been mixed up in say, that Montesi scandal. All the ex-collaborators and spivs and drug addicts in Italy seem to have been in on it——"

He broke off. Audie was looking up at him, and he saw her face change. Her eyes opened wide, and filled with tears, and her lip quivered.

Then she pulled herself together. She said: "No, Miro wasn't in the Montesi case, I can guarantee that because, you see, my husband was."

There was a silence. Audie looked up and Mark saw again the look around her eyes he had noticed at Sunningdale.

"Audie," he said, "I'm sorry I hurt you. I didn't know." Suddenly he went over, bent down and took her gloved hand. He held it gently for a moment, and then let it go.

"Gianni takes drugs," Audie said. He's been doing it for years. That's all. He's not a crook. He was involved in the Montesi thing. He was one of the people who were talked about. He hoped all the talk would die down if he went abroad for a bit."

I see. And now?"

He's had a long treatment. They think he's broken the drug thing, but he's been very ill. He's in hospital. He's getting better."

"And you'll go back to him?"

Audie smiled, pathetically. "I guess so. He says he needs me."

Mark looked at her a long look. "Well—that's something, to be needed." He had meant only to comfort her, but he heard the note of pain in his own voice.

Why, Mark!" she said. "What do you mean?"

Just then the door opened. "You're in luck," said Ed Brohweiter, "I got you two places on the Paris plane. . . ."

Mark drained his coffee, wiped his mouth with his napkin and put his hand in his pocket for cigarettes. It had been an excellent breakfast, and he had done it justice. He offered Audie a cigarette, and she took it with a smile. She looked well and cheerful and elegant.

Mark's spirits had risen a lot overnight. The feeling of having covered a couple of thousand miles while he slept, of being two-thirds of the way from one continent to another, was, he thought, something like a feeling of being born again. And ahead lay action.

"This Varia, Audie," Mark spoke quietly. "Tell me more about him."

The long seats on which they had stretched out at night had now been put back into their day position, and Audie was sitting beside him.

"He's—he's horrible." He saw Audie's brow wrinkle in a frown.

Yes, I know. But tell me more. For instance, his age. What he looks like."

"He looks like Himmler's death mask. Age . . . I don't know. Early forties, maybe."

"I take it he's a pretty important secretary, pretty close to his boss."

Well, in a way." Audie hesitated for a moment. "He certainly does confidential work, but Miro treats him like dirt. And yet, he is very loyal to Miro. That's the funny thing."

"Maybe Miro pays him well." Mark said. "But to get back to the point—I suppose he'll be acting watchdog in Miro's absence?"

"That's what I'm afraid of." Audie looked quickly at Mark. "I don't like it. Varia is dangerous."

"I'll deal with Varia. He's not important. It's Miro we're after."

Audie said: "What are you going to do?"

"Quite simple. I'm going to break into Miro's apartment and search it. Then I'm going to break into his office and search it."

"What for?"

"For the thing that made Miro desperate. It must be something pretty big. There should be evidence of it. Does he have a safe?"

I don't know," Audie said slowly. "I've only been in his apartment three or four times. I've never seen one. But I remember, the first time I was there there were workmen in, and my aunt said something about strengthening the floor. I kind of wondered vaguely at the time what that was for. It could have been for a safe."

It would have to be a big one if the floor had to be strengthened," Mark said.

"If it was a safe," said Audie, could you open it?" She spoke as though safes were opened by the touch of a fairy wand.

"I don't know." Mark smiled at her. But I could tap on the door . . ."

At Paris airport, Mark and Audie made their way to the booking office and got seats on the next flight to Milan.

Assemble at six fifteen for take-off at six forty-five," they were told.

They went out into the open air. It was sunny and warm. An airliner

Christmas Tree

by WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

"Christmas Tree,
Green and white,
What do you say
This merry night?"

'Nothing at all
What *can* I say
When candles shine
And shadows play?

"Wax on my hair,
Wax on my throat,
Wax on my fine dark
Winter coat,

'Wax on my hips
And tingling flanks,
Hot wax trickling
Down my shanks.

"Wax on my *toes*
Except they're deep
Packed in the flower-pot
Dead asleep."

"Christmas Tree,
Tall and spruce,
Keep your pecker up!"
"What's the use!

"They always forget,
The careless vandals!'
That's why I say,
'Blow the candles!'"

The unique prescription for COLDS & FLU

Symptoms gone – Cold gone!

The unique formula of Beecham's Powders is important to you—and to all sufferers from colds and flu. *Thanks to their fine powder form, they are quickly absorbed, speedy in action.* That's why Beecham's Powders so quickly bring under control the worst symptoms. Sneezing, running eyes, aching head, stuffy nose, hot-and-cold shivers are quickly relieved. And with the disappearance of your symptoms the discomfort and misery of your cold is gone.

READ WHAT PEOPLE SAY

Bad Attack of Flu. *Shivering all over, eyes streaming. I instantly went to bed taking Beecham's Powders. In 48 hours I was as good as new."*

(*Signed*) N. PARKHOUSE, Swansea.

The "Most Awful Cold". *". . . last weekend I caught the most awful cold. I took them (Beecham's Powders) . . . two days later I was at right as ninepence . . ."*

(*Signed*) F. LYON, Portsmouth.

Colds Completely Disappear. *". . . thank you for the wonderful benefit from your Beecham's Powders without having to stay in one single day with a cold each time it has completely disappeared . . ."*

(*Signed*) M. BRANSTON, Kettering.

NEW Family Size

In response to popular demand, a new Family Size Pack of Beecham's Powders is now on Sale at 4/-. *Beecham's Powders are also sold in cartons at 1/9d. or loose at 2 powders for 5½d., and in tablet form at 1/9d. and 4/- per bottle.*

Take BEECHAM'S POWDERS For QUICK RELIEF!

circling low heeled over, and its wing flashed brilliant silver. There was a smell of warm tar and petrol. Everywhere people were standing in groups, luggage was being trundled about.

"We've got three hours to kill," said Mark. "Let's get out somewhere. We need a break."

Round the corner they found a taxi rank and a taxi swung abruptly over to them as Mark raised his hand. He opened the door for Audie, and then as he was about to follow her in, remembered that neither of them had any French money. He walked to the Bureau de Change and exchanged five five dollar bills. It was half his money, but he was determined that this trip at least would be his treat.

He went back to the taxi and explained what he wanted in his slow and rusty French. "Some nice village a quiet café . . . *à douze ou quinze kilometres*."

The village was humble and pretty. The café-restaurant humble and not pretty. But at the back was the garden, with its terrace and its trees running down to the river. They could hear the water gently lapping beyond the hedge and the path which meandered beside it.

"Tell me," Audie said, "why it's nice to be needed. What you were going to tell me last night, when Ed Bruhwriter came in."

Mark felt a tightening of his stomach, and moved uneasily. Then he spoke without looking at Audie.

"Your husband needs you in order to get over drug-taking," he said. "I suppose drug-taking is a kind of illness. So is schizophrenia. That's what my wife has."

There was a silence.

"How long has she been ill?" Audie asked quietly.

"Nearly three years."

"Is it incurable?"

"No. A cure is possible. But there's no sign of it."

"Is she happy?"

"Yes. In her way." Mark took out his wallet. "That's a photograph."

Audie looked at it. "I suppose this was taken when—before she got this?"

"No. About three weeks ago."

Audie looked at the photograph again. "But she's beautiful. And she looks so happy."

"Yes. It's a schizophrenic type. There's a certain type of beautiful girl. . . ." Mark broke off. "Anyway, that's the story."

Realizing that he did not want to talk about it any more, Audie rose to her feet. "Let's pay the bill," she said, "and take a walk by the river."

The river was green and placid screened from the village by a belt of poplars and shrubs. It lapped at their feet, a peaceful sound that made the roar of aeroplane engines seem even farther away. There was no one about, they were completely alone.

They walked on for about a hundred yards in silence, until they came to a stile. Mark put his long legs over it in a single, easy movement and turned to give his hand to Audie. She stepped on to the stile, but, as she was crossing the rail on which she had put her other hand, it shook unsteadily. Mark caught her by the waist and the back of her legs and swung her across. Then, as he put her down he leaned over and kissed her on the lips. After a moment she responded and they held on another blindly.

Then Mark heard the sound of oars and, turning, saw a boat. In it two men with fishing rods were regarding him and Audie with admiring interest. Audie saw them and suddenly broke away from him.

Mark took her hand and they walked on. "When I first saw you," he said, "I thought you looked particularly inaccessible."

"Inaccessible?"

"A look young married women sometimes have—as though they were thinking all the time about the right shade of colour for the dining-room carpet. At the same time, I thought you weren't. There was a look about your eyes. I wanted to know you better."

"And now you do?"

He tightened his grip on her hand a little, but spoke without looking at her. He said: "I know you're a woman, and not pretty nonsense in a refrigerator advertisement. I've seen you crying over the death of a friend. I know you've suffered about Gianni. And now I've kissed you. I ought to apologize."

"No."

"Yes. I'm a bit of a Scots Calvinist, Audie. I believe in people doing their duty. Your duty is to go back to Gianni. Mine is to be around in case Julie ever *does* get better. I've made it more difficult for both of us."

"Do Scots Calvinists always kiss as you kissed me?"

Mark laughed. "Yes, of course. You see, it's not a creed for civilized people, like the English for instance. It's a creed for people with violent passions—people who, in the old days at any rate, went in for murder, loot and rape."

"You're a very contradictory person."

"Who isn't?"

They walked on, without speaking further. But the river was now flowing through the village, on their left were the vegetable gardens of the houses ahead two women who were washing clothes broke off and looked at them curiously.

"I guess we ought to go back," Audie said.

They turned back. At the stile Mark took Audie in his arms and kissed her again, but gently.

"Perhaps you and I could have been happy together," he said.

"Perhaps we could," she replied.

Miro's apartment, Audie said, was in a large new block of flats.

"Would they know you there?" Mark asked.

"No. I guess not."

"Then our best plan would be to go in boldly past the commissionaire, like guests who didn't have to ask their way. Then, when we get to Miro's apartment, I'll let us in, and we'll see what we can see. Is there anywhere we can hire a car?"

"There's a big all-night garage I know. I've hired a car there, once or twice."

"Good. You can hire one there now."

"Are we going somewhere?"

"We might be. But the principal thing is to impress them that you are the American Signora Malatino, rich and respectable, member of a well-known local family. You see, I want to buy some tools too. The things I want are innocent enough in themselves, but put together, they're a safecracker's kit."

It was nine o'clock in the evening and they were drinking coffee in the lounge of the Albergo del Duomo in Milan. When they had arrived, Mark had insisted upon them getting some sleep. He had slept. Audie claimed to have done the same, but Mark doubted it.

Originally he had not wanted to take Audie with him on this expedition, but there were three reasons why it was necessary. He spoke no Italian and, if he were challenged by the commissionaire, he would be stuck. For the same reason, if he found any papers, he would not know which to bring away. And thirdly, Audie believed that Varia was very likely to be acting watchdog . . .

"You're sure you understand quite clearly what you do if Varia opens the door?" Mark said.

"I say, 'Thank God you're here. My uncle is in terrible trouble,' and push past him to try to get him to turn his back on you."

"And keep clear."

"Mark." Audie leaned forward—"for God's sake take care. Varia's really dangerous. She was anxious afraid."

"Look, Audie." Mark said quietly, "we shall surprise Varia. He couldn't conceivably be expecting you. If I thought there was any danger, I wouldn't let you come."

"Are you carrying a gun?" Her voice was tense with nerves.

"Yes," he said. "I am. But if I thought I was going to be making much use of it, I shouldn't be taking you along." He looked at her. "And now we'd better go."

At the garage an attendant in a white coat came up. Audie spoke to him and handed him a card. She looked at Mark. "He's got three Fiats and a Lancia—all in good condition."

"Good. The Lancia," Mark said, and went on to select the best equipment the garage had that was suitable for his purposes. He bought two large tyre levers and a small one, a large wrench, a brace and a variety of bits. Then the attendant found a bag to hold the tool kit.

The Lancia was brought round to the front. The attendant handed Audie the ignition key.

"You drive," said Mark, "you know the way." He put the bag in the back. Audie let in the clutch and in a few moments they were in the Piazza del Duomo, with the vast bulk of the cathedral soaring above them. They drove on in silence for about five minutes. Then, when Audie swung the car round and pulled up, Mark did not realize for a moment that they had arrived.

"Okay," she said. "This is where we park."

He got the bag out of the back of the Lancia. "Talk," he said, "and smile. Remember you're going to a party." They had got round to the front of Miro's apartment house now, and the entrance was just ahead. "I'll tell you a funny story," he said, "or would you prefer a limerick?"

They turned up the steps. "A funny story," Audie said and, as they went through the swing doors, she looked up and laughed as Mark rambled on. There was a uniformed porter and also a pale clerk at a reception desk. On the right, at the back, was a lift.

They entered the lift, and Mark squeezed Audie's arm as it stopped and the doors rolled back. The corridor was lit by concealed lights and had a clean mushroom-coloured carpet. They walked along the corridor and turned right.

"This one," said Audie.

"Ring." Mark touched her on the shoulder. she was shaking a little. Inside the apartment he heard the bell ring. He put the bag down ready to deal with Varia.

They waited.

"Ring again," Mark said, and again he heard the soft purring of the bell.

"Not there," he said.

He examined the door. "I'll have to jemmy this," he said. "It'll make a noise, so if anyone comes, talk fast about your uncle. I'll hold the door open so they won't see the busted lock."

Audie nodded. She looked very pale now, but calm. Mark slipped the end of the tyre lever past the lock, and pulled. The door creaked. He inserted a second lever, deeper and pulled again. The creak was very loud this time. Then he wrenched, and the door gave with a rending crack like a shot.

He pushed the door back, so that the broken lock was not obvious, and went in. Behind him he heard a door open, then a man's voice, concerned and questioning. Then Audie's voice, literally talking fast. He made out the name "Malatino," and then again "Signor Miro Malatino."

After a few moments she joined him. "Not so bad," she said. "It was only the man next door. He claimed to have met me once, though I don't remember him."

"Good. Stay here a minute."

He left Audie in the doorway, went across the hall, and opened an inner door; it was a bathroom, with all the fittings in sky-blue. He went over the rest of the apartment quickly and then returned to the hall.

"Come in," he said, and he took her arm. "There's nobody here."

"Can we fasten the door?" she asked.

"Only with the ordinary lock. The other one is busted."

"Varia may have a key."

"We'll shove something up against it, if you like." Mark closed the door and went to an oak table. He swung it against the door of the apartment.

"Now I'm going to search the apartment thoroughly," he said. "Let's go into the sitting-room."

He opened the door and showed Audie in. He started to go carefully round the room, lifting the pictures off the wall, tapping the skirting, looking behind the furniture.

Audie watched him. She said: "You're looking for the safe?"

"Yes." Mark pulled a cocktail cabinet forward and tapped behind it. He opened a cupboard and Audie heard the click of a light switch.

She stood forward to look. The cupboard was large, with shelves round it, but there wasn't much in it, only a few pieces of china, and some packages covered in newspaper. Mark was examining the back wall.

There was, Audie saw when he turned away from it, a dent of some kind in the plaster. Then he knelt on the floor and tapped. After a moment he ran his finger round the edge of the floor. After that he stepped out of the cupboard and pressed the edge of the floor on the other side.

The floor seemed to Audie to lift a little. Mark put his fingers under it and pulled. The floor swung upwards like a trapdoor, revealing a large green metal door with two narrow gilt lines running round it and a massive inset handle.

"It's enormous," Audie gasped.

"Yes." Mark looked up, and she saw that his face wore a grim, hard look. "Miro has a lot to hide."

"Can you crack it?"

"Maybe, if I had twelve hours. But I don't have to. It's not locked."

"Not locked?" Audie exclaimed.

"No. A safe like this doesn't lock

GIFTS AND GIVING—3

One must be poor to know the luxury of giving.

George Eliot

---

automatically. The handle is in the open position."

"Aren't you going to open it, then?"

"Yes. But first I want you to go through to the bedroom. The extreme corner cupboard there backs on to this one. Open it, and knock three times on the wall. Then wait a moment. Then three more knocks. Got it?"

Audie opened her lips to ask a question, but the sight of Mark's face made her think better of it. "Okay," she said.

As soon as she had turned away Mark pulled at the handle of the safe. The door, delicately counterweighted, swung massively upward at his touch.

Mark looked in for a moment, impassively. As he thought, the papers had been removed. He touched the door again and it folded over with the same slow, massive action. Then he got up, and dusted his knees.

When Audie came back he was sitting in a chair, and he rose as she entered.

"Was that right?" she asked. "Did you hear me?"

"Audie," he said, "When I sent you out of the room, it was a blind. I didn't want you to see what was in the safe."

"What was in the safe?"

"Varia. He'd been shot through the back of the head. You see, you were right. He was a dangerous man."

Audie stared, wide-eyed, at Mark. "Varia . . . dead?" she whispered.

"Yes. But sit down." Mark saw how pale she was. But she hadn't screamed or shown any sign of hysteria.

Audie sat down on the sky-blue settee. "But how?" she asked. "And *why*? I don't seem to understand anything any more. But you sent me out of the room. You expected it."

"I had an idea." Mark sat down in one of the fat easy chairs.

"But how? Do you know any more?"

"Varia was shot within the last twelve hours. He was kneeling by the open safe when he died. That much I know.

I don't have the same certainty that he was shot by Madame Malatino, but it's a hundred to one that he was. And I've a fairly good idea why. I mean by that, a good idea of the outline, although I can't see the details of the picture yet."

I don't understand how you know all that about Varia."

"It's very simple," Mark said. "There's a bullet hole in the back of the cupboard. I noticed that, of course, as soon as I opened the door. The bullet hole is about three feet from the ground.

As Varia was shot through the back of the head, obviously he was kneeling. I know he was shot today because of the warmth of the body."

He was looking at Audie carefully as he spoke. He had thought that by explaining things to her in a matter-of-fact way he could lessen the shock, and the idea seemed to be working.

"And—and Gioia Malatino?" she asked. "How do you know about that? She's supposed to be in London."

"She isn't in London. My guess is that, at the moment, she's at the villa. How far is it?"

"Fifty miles."

"We must go there. On the way I can explain what I think has happened, and what I think *will* happen."

Mark rose to his feet. "Look," he said. "I'll tell you how I see things. Gioia Malatino is on the run. She and Miro were desperate already. Now she's super-desperate. That makes her very dangerous. I don't know how much she knows, or what her resources are. But she's moving fast. I think she's aiming to destroy evidence, cover her tracks and make a getaway."

Audie gave a slightly shaky smile. "All right," she said. "Tell me what you think we ought to do, and let's do it."

"Right. Now that Madame Malatino is around"—somehow he couldn't call her anything but Madame Malatino—"we ought not to go back to the hotel. That's just a hunch. I'll explain it later. And what we were looking for here—whatever it was—has been removed."

"Now I don't know, but I reckon the stuff she took away with her was documentary evidence of some kind. Is there anywhere she could take these except to the villa?"

Audie thought for a moment, pushing out her full lower lip in an unconscious gesture of concentration.

Then she said, "I'm sure she would go to the villa."

Right. Let's get out of here any way." Mark put the bag in the cupboard and swung the door to, and began switching off the lights.

In the street it was very dark, and still surprisingly warm. Mark suddenly felt light-hearted. He took Audie's arm and gently squeezed it. They had turned the corner round which the Lancia was parked. He pulled her to him, and kissed her, first gently, then seriously.

She responded then broke away. "You're crazy," she said. "Everyone can see us." She stood there, looking passionate and troubled and puzzled all at once.

Mark laughed. "I should worry," he said. "You don't seem to understand. I'm on the run. I'm a desperate man. Better get in."

He opened the door of the Lancia for Audie and touched her elbow gently as she slid past him into her place. Then he got in and turned the ignition key. He pressed the starter, let in the clutch, and pushed down the accelerator in one long, continuous movement, pulling the car out from the kerb and round the corner with a punch and a whine of the tyres.

"How do I go?" he asked.

"It's the Maggiore road," she told him. "Turn left any time."

She gave him clear crisp directions, and in a few minutes they turned on to a straight, clear highway. As they did, Mark glanced at the clock on the dashboard. It was nearly midnight.

"Is it like this all the way?" he asked.

"No. The road goes over the plain for about forty miles. Then you suddenly get into the mountains—the foothills of the Alps. But we turn off this road anyway. It goes on to Lake Maggiore. We branch left for Lake Orta. Our road curves round in the mountains a bit."

"Right. Try to sleep," he said.

I couldn't."

"You could. Put your head on my shoulder."

After a moment he felt her lean against him, and he caught a breath of her perfume. After a few minutes he realized from her breathing that she was asleep. . . .

THE mountains, as Audie had said, began quite suddenly. Mark was among them before he realized it, feeling the road pull against him then immediately, seeing a steep, rocky hillside sweep under the headlights as he pulled the car round a corner.

A few minutes later a sign on the roadside told him he was running into the town of Arona. It was a small place, and it was obvious enough which was the main road but where did he turn off it?

He was considering waking Audie when a big tanker overtook him with a roar and she awoke.

"Arona," he said.

Audie peered out. "Second on the left," she decided.

He pulled across the road at the turn she had indicated, and in a few moments they were out of the town and climbing steeply. The road, not as broad as the main highway but still wide and well metalled, turned and wound up the hillside.

"Tell me where we are," Mark said.

"We're going over the ridge between Lake Maggiore and Lake Orta. I think it's about six miles. Maggiore is—I don't know—maybe forty miles long and several miles across. Orta's quite small, maybe ten by one. We come to its south end. The villa is on the west side, about half way up."

"Good. Direct me, and tell me to stop short of it—somewhere where no one would see the car."

"They wouldn't, anyway," Audie said. "The villa is right down on the lake, almost hanging over it. The road is a hundred yards higher hidden by trees." She hesitated a moment, then asked. "What are you going to do?"

I don't know enough to have any cut-and-dried plan. I want to make sure that Madame Malatino is there. I want to see what's happening, what she's doing. What about servants? And dogs?"

"There's a married couple, but they're old. You can disregard them. But there *are* dogs—a couple of big brutes which are there specially as watchdogs."

"That's awkward. How big are the grounds?"

"Not big—maybe an acre, mostly trees. And there's a kind of walled courtyard round the house."

The road ran down sharply. Then it began to rise again.

"We're round the head of the lake," Audie said, "and heading up along the west side."

Mark drove slowly now. He felt almost uncomfortably alert.

After a few minutes, Audie said. The villa's down there, about half a mile ahead."

Mark turned off the headlights and crawled on for five hundred yards. Then he swung the car on to the verge of the road and switched off the engine. As the sound of the engine was cut there was a second of blank silence, and then that silence began to fill up with noise, with a faint whisper of wind in the trees, the rustle of grass, a trickle of water nearby and, from some

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

The archbishop fasted on Tuesday—for that was the day when he killed a man

IN the summer of 1621 George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, was staying at Bramshill with his friend, Lord Zouche. He had been in poor health and hoped the high situation and keen air of Bramshill would restore him.

An ardent Puritan, he had only two years previously opposed with much vehemence the King's Declaration of Sports, which permitted harmless recreations on Sundays.

Nevertheless the archbishop decided to go shooting in the park. Aiming at a buck, he missed it, but his arrow shot straight through the heart of Peter Hawkins, a gamekeeper, who bled to death.

The King, the clergy and the people were astounded and horrified. Such an accident caused by an archbishop had never happened before.

The Archbishop was suspended from office, but later received a royal pardon from James I.

The poor archbishop was deeply afflicted. Henceforth he observed Tuesday, which was the day on which the accident occurred, as a fast. He allowed an annuity to the unfortunate widow—and he never went shooting again.

Lord Zouche's vast red-brick house at Bramshill was finished in 1612. The facts that the same year Henry, Prince of Wales died, that plans for enlargement of the house were immediately abandoned, and that over the entrance a plume of feathers is carved in stone, have led people to suppose that Bramshill was intended to be a residence for the heir to the Throne.

Whatever its purpose was meant to be, Bramshill is generally considered one of the most magnificent Jacobean houses in England. It is now a police college and protected by the National Trust.

In 1699 Sir John Cope, 6th baronet, bought Bramshill. He had painted on the hall screen ninety-two shields of the arms of his family, leaving spaces for his descendants, who owned the estate until just before the last war.

Mrs. Powys, a keen sightseer, who went to dine at Bramshill in October, 1766, described it in her diary as "a most immense pile of building."

What particularly struck her about the house was the cold.

"The range of apartments are so vastly spacious," she wrote, "that one generally sees Sir John (Cope) toward the winter put on his hat to go from one room to another."

How to get there: Bramshill is nine miles from Basingstoke. *Open* May to October, on the third Sunday in each month, 2 till 6.

road far away, the long-drawn hoot of an Italian motor horn.

As Mark moved to get out of the car, Audie said, "I'm coming with you."

"Why?"

"Well, for the usual reason. Suppose you do get close to the house and hear people talking? It would be in Italian—you wouldn't understand it."

There was a brief silence.

"No," Mark said. "I wouldn't. Okay, then. You come a bit of the way, at least. We'll see how we go."

He swung open his door and stepped out. The air was cool and sweet and clear, and he took a deep breath. He said, "I suppose they have a gate opening on to this road?"

"Yes, about three or four hundred yards ahead, painted white."

"Keep behind me," Mark said. "Walk on the grass."

They walked in silence, and Mark could now see well enough to distinguish a dark mass of trees in front and a glimmer of water below to his right. Far away on the other side of the lake he could see pinpoints of light and the shifting glow which meant headlights.

Then, about where he expected it, he saw the white gate ahead. He turned and whispered to Audie, "We'll keep on the road and take a look."

They went past the gate, which was a tall and elaborate affair of hammered ironwork. Mark stared through it, but could make out nothing. Beyond it the grounds were enclosed by a high mossy wall.

After a bit he went up and took a look over it. Then he rejoined Audie.

"I'm going over," he said, "to have a look. You stay here. I'll come back and fetch you if I need you. I'll be back in five minutes anyway. Don't worry. The only thing that's worrying me is that Madame Malatino may be trigger-happy by now. She may lean out of the window and blaze away if the dogs bark."

"But she might hit you."

"Don't be silly. Among trees, and at night—nobody could hit anybody with the kind of gun she's got. I'll be right back."

He climbed over the wall, testing the ground before he stepped down, and then edging forward slowly until he saw the villa in front of him. It was an irregular building with no lights in any of the rooms facing him. But from a glow among the trees he realized that there was a light in one of the windows round the right-hand corner.

There was another glow, a red one, on the ground about twenty yards in front of him on his right.

He moved forward, a foot at a time. Five yards . . . ten yards. The glow came from the dying embers of a bonfire. The faint breeze died, then stirred again from a different direction. He sniffed, and caught the unmistakable smell of burning paper.

A shred of white blew towards his feet. He picked it up and put it in his pocket. At the same moment a dog gave an uncertain experimental bark, and the next instant pandemonium broke loose.

To be concluded next week

WINNER OF COVER CONTEST NO. 10

MR. W. H. MORRIS, of 19 Cransley Crescent, Henleaze, Bristol, has won £100 in JOHN BULL'S cover contest No. 10. His title for Mays's painting of a baby having its first bath in the big tub (November 24) is: THE GURGLE IN THE BATH.

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

NINA WARNER HOOKE'S short story

THE PHILBY TREASURE

A fascinating article by TONI HOWARD

THE MEN WHO CHEATED AT MONTE CARLO

The small woman

Continued from page 19

trooping farther across the mountains with such a party. Several were injured. Gladys turned the house into an improvised nursing home and dressing station, and prayed that the Japanese would come no closer.

Practically every day their troops came out of their Chin Shui headquarters, systematically ravaging the seven villages which lay at intervals along the river bank. They made quite certain to be back inside the walls with the gates locked by nightfall.

Almost every night, holding aloft their lanterns, Gladys and the farmers went down into the valley to aid dazed or wounded peasants.

Five weeks after they had entered Chin Shui, the Japanese started to raid the villages farther up the mountain. As the raids came closer, Gladys realized that, even with the house packed with old and sick, they could not expect mercy from the Japanese. But the news that the small woman who possessed a God with magical powers of protection was staying in the village had reached many people, and a constant stream of supplicants was the result.

The afternoon the Japanese did come, she was tending one of the sick women in an upstairs room. Even before her door banged open, she heard Wan Yu's shrill scream: "They're here, they're here!"

Gladys ran downstairs and across to the hole in the courtyard wall; she peered out. Theirs was the first house in the village, only a small temple about fifty yards away lay farther down the slope. She could hear the priests blowing horns, banging drums and offering up prayers which they hoped would drive the Japanese away.

As she watched, she saw a number of khaki-clad figures come up through the terraces and group near the temple. They talked among themselves. Some of them went towards the temple, others started towards the house. Inevitably the next place they entered would be this courtyard, unless she did something to prevent it.

"Hide yourselves quickly," she shouted to Wan Yu. "I'll try and keep them out."

She ran out to the front gate. She did not know what to do. She only knew that she must stop them, even to the extent of going out and fighting them with her bare hands. If she appeared by herself, perhaps the sight of a "foreign devil" in such an unusual place might occupy their attention for a time; perhaps they would forget the others.

The outside door was solid, the latch of heavy iron, and as she got to it her courage ebbed away. She leaned against the door, turning so that her back was braced against it for support. Her clenched hand went to her heart to try and stop its pounding.

For perhaps ten seconds she stood there in an agony of weakness, fear and indecision. Then into the confusion of her mind with the clarity of an articulate voice came the phrase: *"My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

She stood up straight, and the feeling of panic ebbed away from her. She turned, depressed the latch, swung upon the heavy door and stepped out into the bright sunshine, abruptly aware of Wan Yu's piping voice from the balcony behind her.

"Ai-weh-deh, they've turned back! They're going down the valley. They're going away!"

When she went back inside, the old women were crying in relief.

The Japanese never came back to Wan Yu's village. The weeks passed and in the late summer they pulled back from Chin Shui, back along the trail to Yangcheng and then through to Tsehchow, where they spent the winter. When the news that they had gone reached Gladys, she went back to Chin Shui with Wan Yu and

GIFTS AND GIVING—4

It is not the shilling I give you that counts, but the warmth that it carries with it from my hand.

M. Unamuno

Timothy. She took the brown paper parcel with the post office equipment and gave it back to the rather shame-faced postmaster. She went out along the mule trail, over the mountains and back to Bei Chai Chuang, and then on again to Yangcheng and the Inn of Eight Happinesses.

In February, with the snow beginning to clear, Gladys decided she would visit the Davises, the missionaries at Tsehchow, even though it was occupied by the Japanese. She had had no word from them for many months, and was worried.

The mission and compound at Tsehchow lay outside the walls of the city, and although the Japanese kept a fairly strict surveillance on those passing through the gates, they could not, and did not, keep a check on the hundreds of peasants and refugees who were constantly milling around the city.

Gladys believed that she could pass as a humble Chinese peasant, and, as she arrived at night when even the boldest Japanese were locked behind the city walls, it was a comparatively easy journey. She was welcomed warmly by Jean and David Davis.

They told her they had not been badly treated. This was the second time they had lived under Japanese occupation, and so far they had not been molested.

David was glad of her appearance at this time because he hoped she would help to run the mission while he escorted two elderly European ladies who were still in Tsehchow out of the danger area and away to Chufu on the coast, a month's journey away.

Before David left, there occurred the terrible scene which Gladys was never able to forget, and from which came the injuries that were to trouble her for years.

The mission at Tsehchow was large and rambling: the men's and women's courts were far apart. The Davises lived near the men's court; Gladys, when she stayed with them, quite close to the women's court. It was she, therefore, who first answered the screams and shouts when a party of Japanese, who had crept in through the front gate, began to smash down the doors of the women's rooms around their courtyard: there were at least a hundred staying there, refugees, converts, visitors from villages. Gladys ran round to see what was the matter.

As she ran into the courtyard, a Japanese officer saw her, and snapped a command to a private carrying a rifle. Without warning, he swung the gun and crashed the butt against her head. She fell, barely conscious, realizing only that the rifle butt was still clumping into her body, and that other Japanese soldiers were kicking her ruthlessly into unconsciousness. By the time Davis reached the women's courtyard, Gladys was lying like a limp bundle of rags on the ground.

DAVIS stared aghast. There were at least thirty armed Japanese and struggling screaming women. Against thirty soldiers he knew that physically he stood little chance, but at that moment his dilemma was simply how to prevent the outrage.

"Pray!" he bellowed to the women at the top of his voice. "Pray, all of you!"

The Japanese officer swung on him, a savage curse hissing through his thick lips, as he tugged his revolver from its holster. From point-blank range he levelled it at Davis and pulled the trigger. It was impossible to miss! Davis heard the *click* as the hammer fell, the *click-click-click* as the officer jerked the trigger viciously. Whether all the rounds misfired, whether the pistol was faulty or unloaded, Davis never found out, but no bullet exploded into his body.

Cursing, the officer reversed the grip on the revolver and with the butt-end hit him across the mouth as hard as he could. The impact knocked Davis down; his cheek and mouth were cut. Groggily, like a boxer, he pushed himself up to his knees, blood dripping down his tunic; he shouted again: "Pray! Pray, all of you!"

And now the women and girls were all down on their knees, their hands clasped together, praying loudly. It was a sight to affront and baffle even the most lascivious. The Japanese soldiers, who had all stopped and turned at Davis's entrance, stared stupidly, not knowing what to do. The officer shouted at them, they stood there sullenly. Then he shouted a second order, and the soldiers turned away and shambled out of the courtyard, the officer stalked after them.

The women carried Gladys back to her room, and revived her with cold water. She got up next morning feeling bruised and sore, and not quite certain what had happened.

Although she suffered internal aches and pains for many months afterwards, she did not let them interfere with her work.

In the spring there was heavy fighting around Tsehchow. The Nationalists threw in large forces, and the Japanese, assailed on every supply route and in every village, pulled back from the city towards Luan. Nationalist troops entered the city.

Two or three weeks after they arrived, Chung Rumai, who was called the Bible Woman, came running into the mission to tell Gladys that four men from the Nationalists were asking for an audience with her.

"Well, send them away; they can't come in here."

"You'll have to see them," the Bible

Woman said. "They want somewhere to stay. They're important people."

"Oh, are they? We'll soon see about that." She scurried out of the door to find them.

The four men in civilian clothes were standing in the compound outside the mission door. She snapped brusquely, "I'm sorry, but you can't come in here. This is a mission compound and we must observe our neutrality. You'll have to leave at once."

The leader of the party was a young Chinese with a dignity rather like that of the mandarin.

"We are sorry to cause you trouble," he said. "We thought you might help us."

He inclined his head slightly, and his companions turned away. Gladys noticed the dark, shining hair brushed up from the high pale forehead, the dark, almond-shaped eyes under black eyebrows, the clear golden skin, ears set close to a well-shaped head.

He said quietly: "When we were in Chungking, the Generalissimo said, 'If you want someone you can trust, go to the Christian Church.' "

She hesitated for a second. "Perhaps you'd better come in and talk to me, if you leave the other three behind."

In the mission, he told her that they were members of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's Intelligence Service. The situation in Shansi was confused, and they had been sent to find out what was going on. It was an area vital to the defence of China. If they could blunt the prongs of the Japanese attack anywhere, it would be here, where the terrain gave little help to a better-equipped adversary, where lines of communication were easy to cut, and where, at the foot of the peaks, flowed the mighty barrier of the Yellow River.

He added simply: "Will you help China?"

Gladys drew in her breath deeply. She had not expected such a plain question. "I'm Chinese—naturalized Chinese," she said slowly, hesitating, trying to choose her words, "and I care deeply what happens to this country."

She had looked upon the war as a man-inflicted epidemic; she had hated the Japanese, but the hatred had not been motivated by patriotism. It was odd that this gentle-voiced young man should force her to confront these issues.

At length she said: "I will help you as far as my conscience will allow me to."

It was a week before he called again. The Japanese had been driven back many miles towards Luan, and large forces of the Nationalists were grouped around Tsehchow. The Chinese general and his staff had set up their headquarters in the city. He came upon some small pretext to see if his men could attend services at the mission. She said she would be glad if they did: several Japanese Christians had attended the services when their forces had occupied the city.

She noticed his eyebrows lift, the quick, angry dart of his eyes. She felt her colour rising.

"That is what I came to China for—to preach the Gospel of Christ," she said sharply.

He inclined his head in a small bow.

He told her about himself; he had been educated in Peking, trained at the central military academy; how he had travelled all over China; and above all how he yearned for a China strong and free and incorruptible. As he bowed goodbye to her, and asked if he might come and talk to her again, she became aware that he had called to see *her*.

When he had gone, she went across to the cracked mirror in the corner of her room and stared at herself. She was thirty-three; her eyes were large and dark, and although her skin was tanned by the sun, the years had chiselled only a few faint lines from their corners; but how sombre was the dark blue high-necked tunic which she was wearing!

He came the evening before she was setting off for three isolated villages deep in the mountains, a very lonely and difficult trek. She laughed and told him about it, wondering why he seemed perturbed as she described the route.

"Aren't there bandits in those mountains?" he asked.

"Yes, lots of bandits!"

"And you mean to travel alone?"

"But I usually travel alone. I shall be all right," she said. "I am capable of looking after myself."

"Please take care," he said. "Please take care."

She was a week out in the mountain country, and when she got back Linnan, for she knew his name by now, was waiting for her. His relief was quite plain.

His visits became more and more regular. They became good friends. If she was falling in love, she reasoned, then it was God who allowed it to happen.

She had returned from a long trip into the mountains when the other thing arose. In two of the villages she had found Japanese troops billeted. She had paid small attention to their presence and had gone about her business, ignoring them. She told Linnan about it when she returned. He was very interested and questioned her closely about the number of troops, what weapons they had, where they were situated.

The next time she went into territory occupied by the Japanese she made more careful note of their numbers and their armaments, knowing that her reports would please him. He had stirred in her a latent patriotism for her adopted country. If she could spy for the Nationalist troops, bring back information of military value, pass through the Japanese lines unhindered and unwatched and so help to defeat the common enemy, then she would do these things.

When David Davis returned to Tsehchow, he felt that Gladys needed a holiday. "What you need is a rest cure," he said. "At Lingchuang the Christians are holding a small conference next week. Why don't you go? There's been little bombing there and, as far as I know, no fighting."

She agreed to go. She was perfectly aware by now that she was deeply in love.

She set off for Lingchuang in high spirits. With her went the Bible Woman, Chung Rumai, Timothy and one of her girls, Sualan. . . .

Late on the last night of the conference, a strange rumour reached them; an unknown army was approaching the town. Japanese? Bandit? Communist? No one seemed to know. People made preparations to leave. It was one thing to live in a Japanese-occupied town, but quite another to be in residence when a victorious army first arrived.

So at dawn the next day, Gladys, the Bible Woman, Timothy and Sualan, with a young Chinese doctor, his mother, his wife and baby, and many other people left the city as soon as the gates were opened. Behind them there was soon a steady stream of refugees moving out of Lingchuang.

They were perhaps a mile from the city when they saw the stream of refugees falling back on either side, and for one moment of panic, Gladys thought the enemy was among them. Then she saw that the horsemen galloping towards the mountains were Chinese cavalry, the pride of the Nationalist armies. Gladys wondered why the faces of the horsemen were so grim and intent. Then suddenly she knew. Above the pounding of the hooves on the baked earth came the sound of diving aircraft. She screamed at the children.

"Into the fields. Run, run! Into the fields! Throw yourselves flat!"

The earth was churned. Horses screamed horribly. There was a great shout of utter agony as the planes roared along the column of refugees and horsemen, machine gunning all beneath them.

Dead and dying horses, men, women and children collapsed like puppets with the wires suddenly released. They choked the road. Riderless horses, heads thrown high, eyes bloodshot, leaped a low wall, crashed frenziedly through the wheat fields. Then the silver planes droned away.

Gladys stood up, trembling.

Timothy and Sualan clutched at her jacket, saying nothing. Others looked expectantly towards her. They were dumb also. Looking back along the heaps of bodies, they could see the chaos at the gates. Corpses of horses and humans had piled up and choked the exit; within the city, people were screaming and heaving to get out. Every impulse in Gladys's mind told her to fly to the mountains, to leave this ghastly battlefield and hide in the deep gorges away from the frightfulness. She stood mute. There were hundreds of wounded. The gate must be cleared.

To two countrymen with her party, she said: "You will take the women and children to the mountains. Wait for us there. The doctor and I will stay here to help. We'll join you this evening." She looked at the doctor as she spoke. He nodded nervously.

GLADYS and the young doctor hurried back towards the gateway. As they walked, she gathered every uninjured man, exhorting, threatening and scolding, in an attempt to muster a party to clear the gate. Dazed and blank-faced they followed her. Some, weeping beside the bodies of their dead, could not be cajoled into moving.

They reached the gate. The dead horses and humans and baggage were piled high in a grotesque barricade over which the townspeople were trying to clamber. Gladys ran around shrilling instructions to her helpers. They heaved aside the bodies until a passageway was cleared. Then, with the doctor, she began to do what she could to help the wounded. Soldiers who were unhurt, or only slightly wounded, lent a hand. In the late afternoon, other soldiers arrived to clear the mess, and Gladys and the doctor felt they could leave.

Numbed, bloodstained, exhausted, they walked slowly along the track towards the mountains. They found Chung Rumai, the doctor's wife, and his mother and the children, Timothy and Sualan, sheltering at a bend. The two countrymen had been to their own village and returned. They had found their own people preparing to flee, and were about to join them.

Rumours and counter-rumours were everywhere. Gladys realized that, at that moment, the only safe place was in the mountains far from any town or village.

Weary and sick at heart, the little party moved off the road and up through the mountains, seeking sanctuary. That night they spent crouched under a rock. In the afternoon of the second day they discovered a large, dry cave half way up a steep slope. The children and the women were very tired and had no wish to go any farther, and black thunder clouds were massing overhead, filling the sky between the peaks with an ominous purple colour. As they crept into the cave the storm broke, and rain lashed down out of the sky.

For six weeks they lived in that cave, collecting dried rushes from the valley for their beds. The nearest supply of water was five miles away, but they saw in that factor an added safeguard. A village lay just beyond the well, and there they bought eggs and grain.

One afternoon Gladys was seated comfortably on a rock a mile away

from the cave, and quite alone, when suddenly she was conscious of movement near her. She looked up startled. She saw a farmer's boy of about fifteen or sixteen. He wore a straw hat, a torn blue jacket and trousers. Over his arm was a small basket containing half a dozen eggs.

"Who are you?" she snapped.

It was a second or two before his lips moved. "I'm selling these eggs," he said.

Gladys's eyes narrowed at such an obvious lie. His eyes dropped. He shifted uncomfortably but said nothing.

"You can go back and tell whoever you're spying for that we're all here," she said angrily. It could be that the local bandit leader, or a Communist group, had got wind of the strangers in the neighbourhood, and this boy had been sent out to spy. She watched him clamber back up the mountainside before she hurried back to the cave.

The others listened to her story with dismay. She said: "We must leave first thing tomorrow morning and find a new place to hide."

As soon as it was light the next day, she was impatient to be off but the others dawdled.

"Look," she said, "I'll go on ahead, and wait for you at the end of the valley. Please hurry up!" She set off with Timothy. They reached the end of the valley, climbed a slight rise which led into the next. As they breasted the crest, Gladys came to an abrupt halt. Spread out across the valley and advancing towards them was a line of horsemen, obviously searching. To Gladys it meant but one thing; they were seeking out her party.

She said quickly to Timothy: "Run back and tell the others to go up the valley in the opposite direction. Tell them to go as far as they can, and hide."

She watched him run back down the valley, then she turned towards the horsemen and walked boldly in their direction.

While she was still some distance off, she shouted defiantly, "If it's me you want, here I am."

As her voice floated down wind, she saw the horseman in the centre point with his hand, and urge his mount into a trot and then into a gallop. As he clattered towards her she saw that he was a Chinese Nationalist officer. Only when he pulled up his horse in a flurry of dust and stamping hooves a few yards from her, tossed the reins over its head, swung out of the saddle and raced towards her, did she realize it was Linnan.

She clung briefly in his arms. In an agitated voice he told her what had occurred; how after the attack on Lingchuang, he had briefed everyone he could find in the countryside to keep a look-out for her, offering a reward if they found her. The farmer's boy had brought back the information he needed.

They went on to the cave, finding the others about to leave; they gathered around laughing and chattering in relief. Linnan gave them the news: sporadic fighting was going on everywhere. For the present it was better that they remained in the cave.

When they did return to Tsehchow it was firmly in Chinese hands.

With her Bible, Gladys moved during the following summer through villages sometimes occupied by the Japanese, sometimes by the Nationalists. If they knew she was in their territory, the enemy ignored her; she was no different from the thousands of refugees wandering around the countryside. They were unaware that she took careful notice of their dispositions, that she passed this information back to the Nationalist troops, and even led them to where she knew the enemy would be. She knew exactly what she was doing and was not ashamed of her actions. She was Chinese by adoption.

Few love affairs can have flourished in circumstances stranger than that of Gladys's and Linnan's. They met at odd moments in the mountains, in shattered villages, in the bombed towns. They talked at odd moments between

"Relax, dear. He's only calling for his Christmas box"

battles and births and baptisings. They exchanged scraps of news, had a meal together, talked of the future they would build in the new China.

They discussed marriage. He was eager that they should marry at once, live together as man and wife as best they could, war or no war. It was Gladys who said, "No." The war had to be won first.

She wrote to her family in England and told them that she was going to marry a Chinese, and hoped that they would understand. Her father replied that if her happiness would be secure with this man, they would be happy also.

With the coming of spring, every day brought the Japanese closer to Tsehchow. In the fields and villages a few miles outside, the Chinese troops resisted them valiantly. A stream of wounded was passed back into Tsehchow; even the compound of the mission was used as a dressing station. Often Gladys went out with the bearers to bring in wounded men: they used doors torn from their hinges as stretchers.

Refugees packed into the mission and streamed through the city every day. The Japanese were steadily bringing up reinforcements and applying heavy

GIFTS AND GIVING—5

Who gives at once gives twice.

Publilius Syrus

pressure. The noise of the rifle and artillery fire was continuous.

In spite of all this, Gladys was determined not to leave the city. She had lived so often under Japanese occupation that she felt she might protect her people from some of the worse excesses of their troops. She was worried about the children, however. From its inception, the Tsehchow mission had always cared for orphans; there were always fifty to a hundred in residence, but the number had grown enormously during the past few months. Now there were over two hundred to be looked after.

She had known for some time that Madame Chiang Kai-shek had started a fund for war orphans, far away in Chungking. Orphans were collected from war-ravaged areas and sent to the ancient capital of Sian, in Shensi, and there fed, clothed and sheltered. They were even given some schooling. During the winter, Gladys had written on impulse to the authorities in Chungking, asking if they could help her. A month later she got a reply. If the children could be brought to Sian, they would gladly be looked after.

She decided that half of them must go at once. She briefed Tsin Pen Kuang, a convert, for the journey. With money and supplies he set off with a hundred children for the Yellow River, where they would cross and catch a train to Sian. Their journey was uneventful, and three weeks later Gladys heard that they had arrived safely. She also learned that Tsin Pen Kuang was returning so that he could convoy the remaining hundred children to Sian.

With conditions at the mission becoming more and more chaotic, she eagerly awaited his arrival. She did not know, and would not know until months later, that on the return journey he was captured by the Japanese and, presumably, shot.

The morning that David Davis returned after another visit to the coast—to take his wife and family to safety—Gladys was on her knees beside a wounded man in the mission compound, a bowl of hot water by her side. She heard a voice behind her, and recognised it at once. She turned and tried to smile a welcome but found it impossible. Her thoughts translated themselves into words she would rather not have said. "Oh, David, why did you have to come back now? It's so dangerous!" she said.

Now that he had evacuated his wife and children and the last remaining Europeans in Tsehchow, the mission was his concern. At the port of Chifu he had left his family in comparative safety in Japanese-occupied territory and applied for permission to return to Tsehchow. It had been refused. Undaunted, he applied for permission to visit a neighbouring town. This he received. He had decided that, come what may, he was going back to his mission.

He set off with his pass to the neighbouring town, and "disappeared." He knew the Chinese people and ways of living off the country. He avoided the main routes where he might find Japanese and travelled "black" across country. It was more than a thousand miles and it took him over a month by a circuitous route. He walked every yard of the way.

And he arrived to find his mission packed with refugees and wounded soldiers, with a Japanese division fighting only a few miles away, and confusion everywhere.

There was no time for Gladys to do more than exchange a few words with him; time was important, for she had decided that, at all costs, the remaining hundred children must be moved to safety. She was arranging that they should move back to Yangcheng that very day.

With a couple of women mission workers in charge, she lined them up in a long procession, made a rough check that they all carried their bedding rolls, basins and chopsticks, and saw them out of the mission gate—a long crocodile of singing, squalling children headed across the plain, bound for the mountains and the safety of Yangcheng.

That evening she held a small prayer meeting in the mission chapel. It broke up quite early, but she noticed one young soldier—soldiers often attended the services—reluctant to go.

"I had to wait until the others had gone," he said mysteriously. "I have a message from the general." He produced an envelope from his breast pocket and handed it to her. She frowned, tore it open, and scrutinized the simple page of foolscap. It was written by the adjutant on behalf of the local Chinese general.

"The Chinese forces in Tsehchow are on the point of retreating. The general would like you to accompany the army, who will take you to safety. If you go with this orderly he will provide you with a horse and lead you to a rendezvous."

The letter angered her. She had been in danger many times during the past years. She grabbed the orderly's pencil and scribbled on the back of the letter, *Chi Tuo T'u Pu Tsai* ("Christians never retreat!").

"Take that back to your general," she said.

It was the following afternoon that the orderly appeared again, his pale, thin face wearing a worried look. He was flustered, agitated, stammering in his excitement. "The general pleads with you to come to safety at once."

She put down her bowl and stood up.

"Thank you for coming to tell me this," she said, "but, as I have already told you, I will not go with the army, no matter what happens. If I stay in Tsehchow, or if I go into the mountains, it makes no difference."

All that day Tsehchow was evacuated, and the city was by now almost deserted. Gladys had not had time to discuss the general's message even with David. She knew he would not leave the mission until he was forced out of it. . . .

For many days the rattle of small arms and machine gun fire, the duller thunder of mortars and heavy artillery had punctuated every waking and sleeping moment. Suddenly, that evening, it ceased. It was late, and many people were already sleeping, but the very silence was, in some strange manner, ominous, terrifying.

Gladys was annoyed at her own uneasiness and fear. She lay on her bed, fully dressed as usual, and closed her eyes. Weary from the long hours of organization and nursing, she dozed off. When the gravel rattled against her window-pane she awoke, startled.

She struggled up out of sleep and got to the door. "Who's there?" she called sharply. She could not hear the reply but recognized the voice as that of the general's orderly. She unbolted the door.

He stood there, a dark shadow against the lighter sky. His voice was agitated. "I have come to ask you to retreat with us at once, Ai-weh-deh," he said quickly.

Because she was a little frightened, herself, her voice was irritable. "I've told you already I shall not retreat with the army," she snapped. "Why do you have to bother me at this time of night?"

His voice was full of appeal. "Whether you leave with us or not, you must leave. We have received certain information."

"What information?"

"The Japanese have put a price on your head."

NEXT WEEK: Gladys flees with a hundred children across the mountains

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REGISTERED readers are notified that JOHN BULL'S Free Insurance Gift will continue in force, with the same benefits and conditions as apply at present, until December 31, 1957, unless previously terminated or amended by publication of notice in JOHN BULL. Registered readers automatically qualify for the benefits of the scheme. They need not reregister, but if any change of address or newsagent has taken place, full details must be sent to JOHN BULL Insurance Department, 96 Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

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4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated February 2), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, January 19, for early news of *Bullets* No. 2,071 result.)

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Eisenhower
On The Wages Front
Gunboat Diplomacy
Down Came The Smog And
At The Crossroads
Boiling Over
Great Big Bully
Down At The Docks
Snapping And Snarling
Sales
Job For The Chemist
Poor Mr. Jaywalker
The Better Way
Slippery Road
Girl At A Typewriter
Gruelling Task
Chicken-feed
If We Could Buy Brains

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

To Protect Our.....
All Russia's.....
Up There On The.....
Before It's Too.....
Someone Got....., So In A.....Of Her Own

EXAMPLE 6d.

BULLET .....

EX. 6d.

B. .....

EX. 6d.

B. .....

EX. 6d.

B. .....

EX. 6d.

B. .....

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(Each winner from £25 to £5 receives also a Christmas Turkey.)

Winners of £3 plus Turkey and £2 plus Fowl have been notified. 1,500 "Good Shots" have also been posted.

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